REFERENCE LIBRARY
CAMBRIDGE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

SIXTH SERIES—VOLUME 231

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FORTY-SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 1992-93

COMPRISING PERIOD
1 November—5 November 1993

HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

(Formed by the Rt. Hon. John Major, MP, June 1993)

Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service—The Rt. Hon. John Major, MP
Lord Chancellor—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mackay of Clashfern
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs—The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd, CBE, MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer—The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke, QC, MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department—The Rt. Hon. Michael Howard, QC, MP
President of the Board of Trade (Secretary of State for Trade and Industry)—The Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, MP
Secretary of State for Transport—The Rt. Hon. John MacGregor, OBE, MP
Secretary of State for Defence—The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Rifkind, QC, MP
Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Wakeham
Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons—The Rt. Hon. Tony Newton, OBE, MP
Secretary of State for the Environment—The Rt. Hon. John Gummer, MP
Secretary of State for National Heritage—The Rt. Hon. Peter Brooke, CH, MP
Secretary of State for Employment—The Rt. Hon. David Hunt, MBE, MP
Secretary of State for Social Security—The Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley, MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—The Rt. Hon. William Waldegrave, MP
Secretary of State for Scotland—The Rt. Hon. Ian Lang, MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland—The Rt. Hon. Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, MP
Secretary of State for Education—The Rt. Hon. John Patten, MP
Secretary of State for Health—The Rt. Hon. Virginia Bottomley, MP
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food—The Rt. Hon. Gillian Shephard, MP
Chief Secretary to the Treasury—The Rt. Hon. Michael Portillo, MP
Secretary of State for Wales—The Rt. Hon. John Redwood, MP

LAW OFFICERS

Attorney-General—The Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Lyell, QC, MP
Lord-Advocate—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Rodger of Earlsferry, QC
Solicitor-General—Sir Derek Spencer, QC, MP
Solicitor-General for Scotland—Thomas Dawson, Esq, QC

MINISTERS NOT IN THE CABINET

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury—The Rt. Hon. Richard Ryder, OBE, MP
Ministers of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office—
- Minister for Overseas Development—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Chalker of Wallasey
- The Rt. Hon. Alastair Goodlad, MP
- The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hogg, QC, MP
- David Heathcoat-Amory, Esq, MP

Ministers of State, Home Office—
- The Rt. Hon. The Earl Ferrers
- Peter Lloyd, Esq, MP
- David Maclean, Esq, MP

Financial Secretary to the Treasury—Stephen Dorrell, Esq, MP
Paymaster General—The Rt. Hon. Sir John Cope, MP
Ministers of State, Department of Trade and Industry—
- Minister for Energy—Tim Eggar, Esq, MP
- Minister for Industry—The Rt. Hon. Tim Sainsbury, MP
- Minister for Trade—Richard Needham, Esq, MP

Ministers of State, Department of Transport—
- Minister for Public Transport—The Rt. Hon. Roger Freeman, MP
- Minister for Aviation and Shipping—The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Caithness

Ministers of State, Ministry of Defence—
- Minister of State for Defence Procurement—Jonathan Aitken, Esq, MP
- Minister of State for the Armed Forces—Jeremy Hanley, Esq, MP

Ministers of State, Department of the Environment—
- Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction—The Rt. Hon. Sir George Young, MP
- Minister for Local Government and Planning—David Curry, Esq, MP
- Minister for the Environment and Countryside—Tim Yeo, Esq, MP

Minister of State, Department of Employment—Michael Forsyth, Esq, MP
Minister of State, Department of Social Security—
- Minister for Social Security and Disabled People—The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Scott, MBE, MP

Minister of State, Scottish Office—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, QC

MINISTERS OF STATE, NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE—
Robert Atkins, Esq, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Wheeler, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Blatch, CBE
MINISTER OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—
Minister for Health—Dr. Brian Mawhinney, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD—Michael Jack, Esq, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, WELSH OFFICE—The Rt. Hon. Sir Wyn Roberts, MP

DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND MINISTERS

Agriculture, Fisheries and Food—
MINISTER—The Rt. Hon. Gillian Shephard, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—Michael Jack, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES—
The Earl Howe
The Hon. Nicholas Soames, MP

Defence—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Rifkind, QC, MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE PROCUREMENT—Jonathan Aitken, Esq, MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES—Jeremy Hanley, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—The Lord Cecil of Essenden

Education—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Patten, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Blatch, CBE
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCHOOLS—Eric Forth, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Robin Squire, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION—Timothy Boswell, Esq, MP

Employment—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. David Hunt, MBE, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—Michael Forsyth, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Henley
Miss Ann Widdecombe, MP

Environment—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Gummer, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction—The Rt. Hon. Sir George Young, MP
Minister for Local Government and Planning—David Curry, Esq, MP
Minister for the Environment and Countryside—Tim Yeo, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Tony Baldry, Esq, MP
The Baroness Denton, CBE

Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd, CBE, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Overseas Development—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Chalker of Wallasey
The Right Hon. Alastair Goodlad, MP
The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hogg, QC, MP
David Heathcoat-Amory, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—The Hon. Mark Lennox-Boyd, MP

Health—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH—The Rt. Hon. Virginia Bottomley, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Minister for Health—Dr. Brian Mawhinney, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Hon. Tom Sackville, MP
The Baroness Cumberlege, CBE
John Bowis, Esq, OBE, MP

Home Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT—The Rt. Hon. Michael Howard, QC, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. The Earl Ferrers
Peter Lloyd, Esq, MP
David Maclean, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Charles Wardle, Esq, MP

Law Officers' Department—
ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Lyell, QC, MP
SOLICITOR-GENERAL—Sir Derek Spencer, QC, MP

Lord Advocate's Department—
LORD-ADVOCATE—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Rodger of Earlsferry, QC
SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND—Thomas Dawson, Esq, QC

Lord Chancellor's Department—
LORD CHANCELLOR—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mackay of Clashfern
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—John M. Taylor, Esq, MP

National Heritage—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NATIONAL HERITAGE—The Rt. Hon. Peter Brooke, CH, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Iain Sproat, Esq, MP

Northern Ireland Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND—The Rt. Hon. Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Robert Atkins, Esq, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Wheeler, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Earl of Arran
Michael Ancram, Esq, MP

Paymaster General's Office—
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir John Cope, MP

Privy Council Office—
LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—The Rt. Hon. Tony Newton, OBE, MP
LORD PRIVY SEAL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Wakeham

Public Service and Science, Office of—
CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—The Rt. Hon. William Waldegrave, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—David Davis, Esq, MP

Scottish Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND—The Rt. Hon. Ian Lang, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, QC
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, MP
Allan Stewart, Esq, MP
Sir Hector Monro, MP

Social Security—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOCIAL SECURITY—The Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Minister for Social Security and Disabled People—The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Scott, MBE, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Alistair Burt, Esq, MP
William Hague, Esq, MP
The Viscount Astor

Trade and Industry—
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY)—The Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Energy—Tim Eggar, Esq, MP
Minister for Industry—The Rt. Hon. Tim Sainsbury, MP
Minister for Trade—Richard Needham, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND SMALL FIRMS—The Lord Strathclyde
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CORPORATE AFFAIRS—Neil Hamilton, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TECHNOLOGY—Patrick McLoughlin, Esq, MP

Transport—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT—The Rt. Hon. John MacGregor, OBE, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Public Transport—The Rt. Hon. Roger Freeman, MP
Minister for Aviation and Shipping—The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Caithness
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Robert Key, Esq, MP (Minister for Roads and Traffic)
Steve Norris, Esq, MP (Minister for Transport in London)

Treasury—

PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. John Major, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke, QC, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Michael Portillo, MP
FINANCIAL SECRETARY—Stephen Dorrell, Esq, MP
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir John Cope, MP
ECONOMIC SECRETARY—Anthony Nelson, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Richard Ryder, OBE, MP
LORDS COMMISSIONERS—
Irvine Patnick, Esq, OBE, MP
Nicholas Baker, Esq, MP
Timothy Wood, Esq, MP
Timothy Kirkhope, Esq, MP
Andrew Mackay, Esq, MP
ASSISTANT WHIPS—
Robert G. Hughes, Esq, MP
James Arbuthnot, Esq, MP
Andrew Mitchell, Esq, MP
Michael Brown, Esq, MP
Derek Conway, Esq, MP

Welsh Office—

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES—The Rt. Hon. John Redwood, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Sir Wyn Roberts, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Gwilym Jones, Esq, MP

Her Majesty's Household—

LORD CHAMBERLAIN—The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Airlie, KT, GCVO
LORD STEWARD—The Viscount Ridley, TD
MASTER OF THE HORSE—The Lord Somerleyton
TREASURER—Greg Knight, Esq, MP
COMPTROLLER—David Lightbown, Esq, MP
VICE-CHAMBERLAIN—Sydney Chapman, Esq, MP
CAPTAIN OF THE HONOURABLE CORPS OF GENTLEMEN-AT-ARMS—The Viscount Ullswater
CAPTAIN OF THE QUEEN'S BODYGUARD OF THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD—The Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne
LORDS IN WAITING—The Viscount Long, CBE, The Viscount St. Davids, The Viscount Goschen, The Lord Mackay
BARONESS IN WAITING—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Trumpington

SECOND CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONER, REPRESENTING CHURCH COMMISSIONERS—The Rt. Hon. Michael Alison, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

THE SPEAKER—The Rt. Hon. Betty Boothroyd, MP

CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Michael Morris, Esq, MP

FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Geoffrey Lofthouse, Esq, MP

SECOND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Dame Janet Fookes, MP

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL—

Dr. John G. Blackburn, MP, Joe Benton, Esq, MP, Frank Cook, Esq, MP, Patrick Cormack, Esq, MP, Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody, MP, Alan Haselhurst, Esq, MP, Robert Hicks, Esq, MP, James Hill, Esq, MP, Norman Hogg, Esq, MP, Roy Hughes, Esq, MP, Sir John Hunt, MP, Barry Jones, Esq, MP, Martyn Jones, Esq, MP, Sir James Kilfedder, MP, Sir David Knox, MP, John McWilliam, Esq, MP, Michael J. Martin, Esq, MP, Iain Mills, Esq, MP, Edward O'Hara, Esq, MP, Sir Giles Shaw, MP, Michael Shersby, Esq, MP, Roger Sims, Esq, MP, Mrs. Ann Winterton, MP, Nicholas Winterton, Esq, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION—

The Rt. Hon. The Speaker (Chairman), The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP, The Rt. Hon. Alan Beith, MP, The Rt. Hon. Paul Channon, MP, The Rt. Hon. Tony Newton, OBE, MP, The Rt. Hon. Peter Shore, MP

SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION—R. W. G. Wilson

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—

Sir Clifford Boulton, KCB (Chairman), Sir Alan Urwick, KCVO, CMG, Miss J. B. Tanfield, J. Rodda, FCA, I. D. Church, Mrs. S. J. Harrison

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—B. A. Wilson

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

SPEAKER'S SECRETARY—N. Bevan, CB

ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO THE SPEAKER—Mrs. M. E. Thomson

TRAINBEARER—D. J. Lord, MBE

DEPUTY TRAINBEARER—P. L. Warwick

DIARY SECRETARY—Mrs. S. Norvell

SPEAKER'S CHAPLAIN—Rev. Canon D. C. Gray, TD, PhD

SPEAKER'S COUNSEL—H. Knorpel, CB, QC, T. J. G. Pratt, CB

ASSISTANT TO SPEAKER'S COUNSEL—P. Harvey, CB

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS

SECRETARY TO THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Ms P. A. Helme

DEPARTMENT OF THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—Sir Clifford Boulton, KCB

CLERK ASSISTANT—D. W. Limon, CB

CLERK OF COMMITTEES—J. F. Sweetman, CB, TD

PRINCIPAL CLERKS—

W. R. McKay (Public Bills)
C. B. Winnifrith (Table Office)
R. B. Sands (Select Committees)
G. Cubie (Overseas Office)
A. J. Hastings (Journal Office)
R. J. Willoughby (Private Bills)
D. G. Millar (Select Committees)
M. R. Jack, PhD (Standing Committees)
R. W. G. Wilson (Domestic Committees)
W. A. Proctor (Financial Committees)

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL CLERKS—S. A. L. Panton, Mrs. J. Sharpe, Ms A. Milner-Barry, F. A. Cranmer, R. J. Rogers, C. R. M. Ward, PhD, Ms H. E. Irwin, D. W. N. Doig, D. L. Natzler, E. P. Silk, A. R. Kennon, L. C. Laurence Smyth, S. J. Patrick, D. J. Gerhold, C. J. Poyser, D. F. Harrison, S. J. Priestley, A. H. Doherty, P. A. Evans, R. I. S. Phillips, R. G. James

SENIOR CLERKS—Ms P. A. Helme, D. R. Lloyd, R. A. Lambert, B. M. Hutton, J. S. Benger, D Phil, Miss E. C. Samson, N. P. Walker, M. D. Hamlyn, P. C. Seaward, DPhil, C. G. Lee, C. D. Stanton, A. Y. A. Azad, H. R. Neilson (acting), D. Steel (acting), D. J. Clarke (acting), P. E. Bolton (acting)

CLERKS OF DOMESTIC COMMITTEES—K. J. Brown, P. G. Moon

ASSISTANT CLERKS—C. A. Shaw, P. M. Hensher, Ms L. M. Gardner, F. J. Reid, M. Hennessy, G. R. Devine, Mrs. J. N. St. J. Mulley, T. W. P. Healey, Miss S. A. R. Adams

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—G. E. Clayton, Miss R. J. Challis, S. D. Barrett

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—L. L. Kaye, A. P. Hubner, Miss S. J. Fox, Mrs. P. Fisher, F. McShane, J. D. Whatley, M. Clark, Miss A. M. Loader, Miss F. L. Allingham, Mrs. L. M. Nugent, J. A. L. Dresner, M. P. Oxborough, N. P. Wright, Ms C. M. Genis, Mrs. C. Oxborough, R. W. A. Barrand

SPECIALIST ASSISTANTS—J. K. Wheatley, Miss S. Phipps, PhD, Miss C. M. French, Ms C. L. Auchterlonie, C. B. Dibben, J. Cable, V. A. A. Mengot, R. J. Gartside, P. J. King

EDITORIAL SUPERVISOR OF THE VOTE—B. Tidball, DEPUTY—Miss L. Lewis, ASSISTANTS—Miss B. Balcomb, J. Puricelli, K. B. Wood, P. D. Howlett, Mrs. L. R. Shade, P. A. Jack, P. L. J. Sullivan

SECRETARIES—Mrs. G. E. C. Sclater (Clerk of the House), Mrs. S. D. Pamphlett, Miss S. P. Chubb, Mrs. D. Gent, Miss A. T. Power, Miss D. J. Somers, Mrs. K. J. Georgiou, Miss L. Young, Mrs. H. Agnew, Miss S. Littlebury, Mrs. J. Stott, Mrs. A. M. Douglas, Miss K. McClelland, Mrs. B. Hunter, Mrs. A. M. Allen

EXAMINERS OF PETITIONS FOR PRIVATE BILLS—R. J. Willoughby, B. P. Keith

REGISTRAR OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS—R. B. Sands TAXING OFFICER—R. J. Willoughby

SUPERINTENDING CLERK—R. A. Broomfield

CHIEF OFFICE CLERKS—Miss A. Fuki, J. Hole, Miss E. Segal, A. Catinella, Mrs. D. B. Nelson, Miss C. A. Benger

VOTE OFFICE—

DELIVERER OF THE VOTE—H. C. Foster

DEPUTY DELIVERER OF THE VOTE—J. F. Collins ASSISTANT DELIVERER OF THE VOTE—O. B. T. Sweeney

BOOKSHOP MANAGER—C. D. Lister HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICER—B. G. Underwood

SUPERINTENDING CLERKS—Mrs. S. Fuzio, A. J. Ashton

VOTE OFFICE ASSISTANTS—G. E. Howard, C. P. Williams, P. Hannett, J. Harrington, M. D. Cook

DEPARTMENT OF THE SERJEANT AT ARMS

SERJEANT AT ARMS—Sir Alan Urwick, KCVO, CMG

DEPUTY SERJEANT AT ARMS—P. N. W. Jennings

ASSISTANT SERJEANT AT ARMS—M. J. A. Cummins

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SERJEANTS AT ARMS—P. A. J. Wright, J. M. Robertson

CLERK IN CHARGE—Miss S. J. Scott Thomson

ADMISSION ORDER OFFICE—A. Chipperfield, BEM, Mrs. S. J. Warren, A. J. Spencer

PRINCIPAL DOORKEEPER—R. H. Usher

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL DOORKEEPERS—C. E. Gray, D. Shiels

SENIOR DOORKEEPERS—R. A. F. Chapman, J. Town, R. J. Tyack, R. D. Walkerdine

HEAD OFFICE KEEPER—M. Bryant

SENIOR OFFICE KEEPERS—V. M. Roccia, K. R. Dickason, C. R. Harris, BEM

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGER—Mrs. M. Mainland

NURSING SISTER—Miss S. Todd

PARLIAMENTARY WORKS DIRECTORATE—

DIRECTOR OF WORKS—H. P. Webber

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF WORKS—B. C. Sewell

PRINCIPAL WORKS OFFICERS—A. Makepeace, R. Bentley, G. Goode, B. R. Hall, C. Hillier, M. Moone, J.F. Moore, M. Trott

SENIOR PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL OFFICERS—C. Brown, C. Cowell, J. Eaton, T. Fox, S. Howard, T. Jardine, B. O'Boyle, J. Stone

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER—A. Blake

DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER—Mrs. S. Morrison

DEPARTMENT OF THE LIBRARY

LIBRARIAN—Miss J. B. Manfield

DEPUTY LIBRARIAN—Miss P. J. Baines, B.Litt

LIBRARY AND RESEARCH—

ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS (Heads of Division)—S. Z. Young, K. G. Cuninghame

DEPUTY ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS (Heads of Section)—Mrs. J. M. Wainwright, FIInfSc, C. C. Pond, PhD, Mrs. C. B. Andrews, R. C. Clements, Mrs. J. M. Lourie, R. J. Ware, DPhil, C. R. Barclay, Mrs. J. M. Fiddick, Mrs. C. M. Gillie, R. J. Twigger, Mrs. G. L. Allen

LIBRARY CLERKS, SENIOR—Ms F. Poole, Ms C. E. Nield, T. N. Edmonds, R. J. Cracknell, CStat, Miss O. M. Gay, Miss B. McInnes, B. K. Winetrobe, Miss M. Baber, Ms A. Walker, Mrs. H. V. Holden, Mrs. P. Carling, Miss J. Seaton, FLA, A. J. L. Crompton, Ms P. Strickland, Miss V. A. Miller, Ms H. M. Jeffs, M.P. Hillyard, S. A. Wise (period), Ms. J. Roll (temporary)

ASSISTANT—Dr. A. Davies, Ms W. T. Wilson, E. H. Wood, Miss N. J. Chedgey, M. Nawaz, P. Bowers, PhD, T. E. Dodd, A. C. Seely, Ms J. K. Dyson, Miss F. M. Watson, G. Danby, PhD, W. F. Lea, PhD, Miss P. M. Hughes, PhD, B. C. Morgan

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—P. W. Skerratt (period), J. A. Prince, MLS (acting)

SENIOR LIBRARY EXECUTIVES—K. N. H. Parry, ALA, Miss C. E. Fretten, ALA, Mrs. P. V. Wiles, Miss I. O. White, ALA, Miss G. L. Cooper, Mrs. P. E. Cook, ALA (acting), Ms F. Whittle (acting)

EDUCATION OFFICER—Mrs. C. Weeds; ASSISTANT—Mrs. C. C. O'Connor

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—E. L. V. MacGregor, Ms B. A. Rowlands, ALA, J. P Brevitt, Miss C. Owens

HIGHER LIBRARY EXECUTIVES—Mrs. D. W. Clark, Miss M. H. Fletcher, Mrs. G. C. Brown, Ms H. Armstrong, Miss E. J. Jones, ALA, G. Haig, Mrs. E. H. Riley, ALA, Mrs. F. M. Ward, Mrs. M. A. Azim, ALA, T. C. Holmes, C. M. Sear, Ms J. B. Hall, ALA, R. Freebury, ALA, A. D. Parker, ALA, Miss G. Rose, Miss C. M. Blair, ALA (acting), Miss A. Hatton (acting), Mrs. J. A. Smith (acting)

EDITOR, WEEKLY BULLETIN—D. B. Inns

LIBRARY EXECUTIVES—P. E. M. Ward, Miss J. Lyall, ALA, Ms Z. Smallwood, Miss L. K. Fleming, Mrs. J. Priestley, Miss C. M. A. Chambers, Miss S. Pepin, ALA, P. C. Tomes, R. O. Steeden, G. G. Newell, Miss V. S. Spratt, B. Smith (acting), Miss K. E. Susilovic (acting), A. B. Estorffe (temporary)

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Miss N. Harland, Mrs. A. J. H. Mara, D. A. Brown, M. Greenhill (Head Library Attendant), Ms J. Fessey, A. J. Fuller, Miss J. M. Perkes, Mrs. H. Onyskiw, A. Clark, Miss A. Gual, Ms M. A. Moulton, Miss N. M. Sutherland, Mrs. C. Millar, Mrs. P. M. Burnett, P. R. Mann, F. M. Codd (acting), Miss J. Appleton (acting)

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

DIRECTOR—J. Rodda, FCA

FEES OFFICE—

ACCOUNTANT—A. J. Lewis

DEPUTY ACCOUNTANT—A. R. Marskell ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANTS—M. Fletcher, M. G. Crowther

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Mrs. D. C. Hill, N. P. Crawley HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Mrs. J. Peach, Mrs. G. M. Baker, Miss R. Harrison, Ms M. R. Morris, G. L. Turner EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—D. M. Allen, D. J. D. Woods, Ms P. R. Mills, Miss S. V. A. Weaver, P. H. Olden, A. D. Rowlands, P. J. S. French, Miss T. D. Ruewell, Miss M. Oliver, Miss D. M. McGuire, Mrs. S. M. Chalmers, R. A. P. Edwards, Mrs. C. J. Stockton, A. C. Martin

FINANCE OFFICE—

HEAD OF OFFICE—M. J. Barram, IPFA, MBCS,

ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANTS—R. H. A. Russell, ACMA, Ms S. Peterson, IPFA

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Mrs. N. Norman

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—P. McGuinness, Ms K. Bigwood, Miss V. E. Wilson

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Miss D. E. Johnson, P. F. Dawson, Miss D. O. McElderry, Miss V. Browne (temporary), Miss R. Astbury (temporary), Ms S. Pratt (temporary), Ms T. Myers (temporary)

ESTABLISHMENTS OFFICE—

HEAD OF OFFICE—B. A. Wilson

DEPUTY HEAD OF OFFICE—J. A. Robb

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER—Miss P. J. Hurford HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICER—Miss J. Bremner

PERSONNEL OFFICE MANAGER—M. Page

PERSONNEL OFFICERS—C. L. Watson, Miss C. E. Jackson, Mrs. R. A. Baker, Mrs. A. McGuinn

COMPUTER OFFICE—

COMPUTER OFFICER—R. S. Morgan, FBCS, FIInfSc NETWORK PLANNING OFFICER—J. Fishenden

NETWORK SUPPORT OFFICER—Mrs. J. M. Cleveland COMPUTER SUPPORT MANAGER—Miss M. Morrison

EXECUTIVE OFFICER—C. J. Bumstead COMPUTER SUPPORT OFFICER—P. Barratt

COMMON SERVICES UNIT—

HEAD OF UNIT—V. H. Stocker HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—R. Gunn, M. J. H. Caswell

INTERNAL AUDITOR—A. A. Cameron SENIOR AUDITOR—S. J. Lewis

STAFF INSPECTOR—R. C. Collins

WELFARE OFFICER—Mrs. A. Mossop

DEPARTMENT OF THE OFFICIAL REPORT

EDITOR—I. D. Church

DEPUTY EDITOR—P. Walker

PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT EDITORS—R. V. Hadlow, J. Gourley, W. G. Garland, Miss H. A. Hales

ASSISTANT EDITORS—Ms C. V. Grainger, Miss V. A. A. Clarke, Miss L. Sutherland, S. M. Hutchinson, C. Fogarty

COMMITTEE SUB-EDITORS—D. Crosswell, Mrs. A. M. Browne, Miss V. A. Widgery, Mrs. H. J. G. Natzler, Mrs. A. Street, L. Gilmore, Ms G. Hardgrave, P. Oglethorpe, P. Hadlow, Miss C. Hanly, M. Watson, Ms. K. Stewart, J. Ransley, Mrs. E. J. Gregory

REPORTERS—Miss E. Morris, Ms J. Dall, Ms P. Kelly, Miss K. Myers, Ms J. Warrington, Ms D. Jones, Mrs. J. Symons, Mrs. J. L. Davies, Miss E. A. Jarka, Miss J. Goodman, Miss J. Levy

PRINCIPAL TRANSCRIBER—D. N. Harrington, MBE

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL TRANSCRIBERS—Mrs. M. J. Harding, Miss J. Beck (acting)

IT MANAGERS—Miss J. L. Brown, R. Daniels

PRINCIPAL HANSARD ASSISTANT—Miss R. Washington

SENIOR HANSARD ASSISTANT—J. Brake

ANNUNCIATOR SUPERINTENDENT—A. E. Thompson

REFRESHMENT DEPARTMENT

DIRECTOR OF CATERING SERVICES—Mrs. S. J. Harrison, MHCIMA

OPERATIONS MANAGER—N. M. Hutson, MHCIMA

CATERING ACCOUNTANT—D. R. W. Wood, FCA

EXECUTIVE CHEF—I. Gabay, MBE

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATOR—Mrs. S. M. Nicholls, FHCIMA, MIPM

CATERING MANAGER, HOUSE OF COMMONS—P. Gale, MHCIMA

CATERING MANAGER, BELLAMY'S—Ms S. Hovells, LHCIMA

BANQUETING MANAGER—C. J. Griffiths

ASSISTANT BANQUETING MANAGER—Miss C. Skidmore, LHCIMA

ASSISTANT CATERING MANAGER—M. W. E. Johnson

ASSISTANT CATERING ACCOUNTANT—Mrs. B. A. Langley

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE CHEF—S. Norris

SYSTEMS MANAGER—D. Capstick

SHORTHAND WRITER TO THE HOUSE—Mrs. P. J. Woolgar

HEAD OF SECURITY—Chief Superintendent A. E. F. Longhurst, LVO

DEPUTY HEAD OF SECURITY—Superintendent C. M. Harris

POSTMASTER—J. Arnold

TRANSPORT MANAGER—J. W. Jones

SUPERVISOR OF PARLIAMENTARY BROADCASTING—Miss M. E. Douglas

DIRECTOR OF THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY—Dr. M. G. Norton

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
[WHICH OPENED 27 APRIL 1992]

FORTY-SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SIXTH SERIES **VOLUME 231**

TWENTY-FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1992-93

House of Commons

Monday 1 November 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRIVATE BUSINESS

CITIBANK INTERNATIONAL BILL *[Lords]*

UNIBANK BILL *[Lords]*

Read the Third time, and passed, with amendments.

Oral Answers to Questions

WALES

Cardiff Airport

1. **Mr. Denzil Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he next intends to use Cardiff Wales airport in the course of his ministerial duties.

The Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. John Redwood): I last used Cardiff Wales airport on 8 September. I have no current plans to use it in the near future, but I will use it whenever my ministerial duties so require. I and my hon. Friends are keen to promote it as a good airport, and to see it as an important part of the south Wales economy.

Mr. Davies: Is the Secretary of State aware that the services to Europe, and in particular to Germany, from Cardiff Wales airport are abysmal? Manufacturing firms in my constituency and throughout south Wales, increasingly require to get their executives and technicians to places such as Frankfurt and Dusseldorf and back in a day. That cannot be done at present. Will the Secretary of State spend his Department's time and resources to establish a daily return flight, five days a week, from Cardiff to Frankfurt?

Mr. Redwood: I am very keen to promote Cardiff Wales airport. I shall organise a meeting with business users and airlines to bring them together and to get more business through the airport. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State was recently on the inaugural flight of the new service to Manchester. The Cardiff Wales airport needs more publicity and the right hon. Gentleman might think it a good idea to use the airport as neutral ground on which the Labour party ladies can get together and settle their differences. That would be newsworthy and promote the airport.

Mr. Sweeney: Will my right hon. Friend join me in congratulating Cardiff Wales airport on its profits last year? Bearing in mind that those profits represent a return of only 1 per cent. on capital for the taxpayer, does my right hon. Friend agree that now is the time to consider privatising Cardiff Wales airport?

Mr. Redwood: As my hon. Friend says, things have been moving in the right direction. I was pleased that the number of passengers using the airport increased by 50 per cent. last year to 900,000 and that the airport is in the black. We will look at all the options for the future of the airport. Anything that will increase business and make the airport a better asset for the people of south Wales will be high on my agenda.

Mr. Rogers: The Secretary of State will realise, or will have been informed, that Cardiff Wales airport was set up by a consortium of local authorities, and funded and paid for by the people of south Wales, not by Her Majesty's Government. Is not the proposition that the airport might be privatised another example of the Secretary of State's skulduggery and thuggery whenever he embarks on privatisation? He has no right to privatise an asset that does not belong to the Welsh Office. The airport belongs to the

people of south Wales, who have invested money in it over many years, and there is a great deal of anger about the proposition to steal private property yet again.

Mr. Redwood: Were we to decide to privatise the airport, the money would not be lost to the people of Wales. The hon. Gentleman might learn something of value were he to look at the great success that other airports in the United Kingdom have had since being privatised. Privatisation is an option at the moment, not a confirmed policy. I intend to consult and think about it before announcing such a policy.

Mr. Richards: When my right hon. Friend uses Cardiff Wales airport, will he take great care to avoid the harridans who have a tendency to prey on the right hon. Member for Llanelli (Mr. Davies)?

Mr. Redwood: I will, indeed, try to avoid those harridans. My hon. Friend has raised an interesting point about the in-fighting in the Welsh Labour party among its female members. I am delighted to note that the hon. Member for Caerphilly (Mr. Davies), who is sitting on the Opposition Front Bench, has been a beneficiary of the strange voting practices and received a better vote this year. I think that he owes that to the Welsh Labour party ladies.

Mr. Morgan: Does the Secretary of State agree that Cardiff Wales airport is a successful and profitable enterprise, which is a credit to its municipal parents, the three county councils of Glamorgan? Would he also like to reassure the employees at that airport that he does not propose to place it in the hands of one of those funny-money residuary bodies run by the usual Tory placemen from central casting and Central Office? Their action, in making a forced sale of that airport, would undoubtedly cost many millions of pounds in lower receipts to the Glamorgan ratepayers who set up that airport.

Mr. Redwood: I shall look at all the options for the future of that airport with the single question in mind as to what would be best for the south Wales economy. I agree with the Opposition that the airport is important to that economy. We need to increase services out of the airport in order to service the business community and other passengers. That would be my intention and there are a number of ways in which that may be pursued. My immediate task is to try to win more business for the airport in the way that I have already described.

Homelessness

2. **Mr. Jon Owen Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many people were recognised as homeless in Cardiff and Wales at the last date for which figures are available.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. Gwilym Jones): The figures are 671 and 2,703 respectively.

Mr. Jon Owen Jones: I do not know where the Minister got those figures, because I am informed that Cardiff city council had to cope with 2,700 inquiries on homelessness last year, which represents a 26 per cent. increase on the previous year. In the past six months, the number of inquiries has increased by a further 12 per cent. What extra help will the Welsh Office give to local authorities such as Cardiff to cope with the huge number of homeless, which has increased as a result of Government policy?

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The answer to the first part of the hon. Gentleman's question is that the figure of 671 came from Cardiff city council and the figure relating to Wales came from the other Welsh local authorities. The hon. Gentleman should be aware that we have supported a project worth £800,000 specifically designed to try to help single, vulnerable, homeless people in Cardiff. I attended the launch of that project a while ago and I went to see one of the new homes provided by it, which was, incidentally, in the hon. Gentleman's constituency.

Mr. Jonathan Evans: Can my hon. Friend confirm that the majority of cases of homelessness are attributable to family breakdowns and to disputes between relatives, parents and the like? Those cases represent the big increase in homelessness to which reference has been made and which is recorded in the figures that have been produced by the Welsh Office, on the basis of information provided by Welsh local authorities.

Mr. Jones: My hon. Friend is correct. It is important to keep those figures in perspective. Of all local authority lettings and housing association lettings, only approximately 25 per cent. are taken by homeless people.

Mr. Alex Carlile: Bearing in mind the evidence that homelessness is increasing in Welsh rural areas as well as in the urban areas, does the Minister agree that it would be quite unacceptable if Government funding for Tai Cymru —Housing for Wales—were the victim of public expenditure cuts?

Mr. Jones: I acknowledge the question that the hon. and learned Gentleman has raised and the importance of funding for Housing for Wales will be given the fullest consideration.

Mr. Wigley: Is the Minister aware that of the 6,000 homeless cases involving children and/or pregnancies in Wales last year, only 500 involved pregnant single mothers, and of those only 47 were allotted permanent accommodation? In those circumstances, is not the Welsh Office going over the top in drawing attention to the plight of those people, rather than that of the 99 per cent. of homeless who do not fall into that category and who experience enormous difficulties in trying to find somewhere to live?

Mr. Jones: No, Madam Speaker. The Welsh Office is certainly not going over the top on that issue. In the interests of all the genuine cases who need housing, it is right that there should not be any unjustified fast track approach to obtaining either council accommodation or housing association accommodation.

Mr. Murphy: Does the Minister agree that he should go back to Cardiff city council to check his figures, since the total number of inquiries from homeless families in that city is nearly 3,000 and nearly 1,200 people were housed in temporary accommodation over the past year? Does he accept that a vital ingredient of family stability is a permanent home and cannot he see that the release of

council capital receipts to build homes for thousands of homeless people in Wales is worth more than 100 moralising speeches about single parents?

Mr. Jones: As I said to the hon. Gentleman's hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, Central (Mr. Jones) the figures quoted were given to us by Welsh local councils, especially by Cardiff city council. I know of no money sitting idly not being used effectively for debt redemption. If there were any such moneys sitting idly, I would look to the councillors to pursue that situation energetically and if they failed to act, I would look to the local electors to show their disapproval at the earliest opportunity.

Poverty

3. **Mr. Llew Smith:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what response he has made to the pamphlet, "The Politics of Poverty in Blaenau Gwent", a copy of which was sent to him in September.

Mr. Redwood: I saw the pamphlet for the first time today and, like much Labour policy-making, it is long on gloom and doom and short on decent remedies. The best way of curing poverty is to create more jobs. That is why on 20 October I published details of the new five-year programme for the valleys to regenerate Blaenau Gwent and the other valley communities.

Mr. Smith: Is the Minister aware, especially after reading the pamphlet today, that, after 14 years of Tory Government, Blaenau Gwent still has one of the worst health problems in the United Kingdom? Is he also aware that in the past week, phase 1 of the Blaenau Gwent hospital commenced and that the commitment was given that phase 2 will commence in 1995? Will he reinforce that commitment and assure the House that the second phase will include a stroke unit? Is the Minister aware that the document was sent to the Welsh Office some 28 days ago and does it not say something about the operations of the Welsh Office that it has come into his hands only today?

Mr. Redwood: I am told that the pamphlet was not addressed to me so it was perfectly proper that it did not go straight to my desk. I have now read it, but, as I said to the hon. Gentleman, we have a big programme for rejuvenating and regenerating the valleys. I hope that he joins me in welcoming Sega as a new investor in Wales, through its links with AB Electronics and the 50 new jobs that that will generate at Abercynon. I hope that he welcomes the Treforest news of STNP creating 129 new jobs as well as 755 new jobs at Tesco. That is what matters —producing new jobs for the valleys, which the hon. Gentleman is asking for in his pamphlet.

Yes, of course, we will ensure high-quality health services and ensure that the right health facilities are made available for his area as elsewhere in the valleys, as set out in the valleys document that I sent to him.

Mr. Ron Davies: None of that is of any relevance whatever to the question asked by my hon. Friend the Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith). Is not it clear from his report that, in 1993, a previously unreported depth of poverty and deprivation that arises directly from unemployment and low pay exists in Wales. It is the direct responsibility of the Government and it is an absolute disgrace after 14 years in office. My hon. Friend should be congratulated on his report rather than criticism being thrown against him. Does not the Secretary of State realise that we need more positive action on jobs and low pay and more investment in housing, health and education? Is not it time that the Tory party started facing up to its responsibilities, rather than indulging in the hypocritical moralising of other people?

Mr. Redwood: The hon. Gentleman will not find me unwilling to accept responsibilities. I have set out in the valleys initiative the Government's major expenditure programmes for the next five years. They are geared to bringing in a lot more private sector investment as well, which is what the valleys require. The programme was very successful during its first five years and the number of long-term unemployed fell importantly and dramatically. I accept that much more needs to be done; I have never made any secret of that. The hon. Gentleman should listen and should read the valleys programme initiative because he will see there a bold vision of the future for a better south Wales, based on more jobs, more prosperity and more investment, which I hope that the Opposition welcome.

Beef

5. **Mr. Fabricant:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what initiatives he has taken to encourage the promotion of Welsh beef for consumption overseas.

The Minister of State, Welsh Office (Sir Wyn Roberts): Welsh Food Promotions Ltd. was set up more than two years ago with a remit to promote all types of food produced in Wales, including beef. The company works closely with Food from Britain in promoting overseas sales.

Mr. Fabricant: My right hon. Friend will be aware of the excellent taste and unique quality of Welsh black cattle. Is he equally aware of the grievous losses suffered by the breeders of Welsh black cattle since the imposition of the ban on exports because of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy scare? Is he aware that Welsh black cattle are fed on natural sources, such as silage in winter and grain in summer? Is he further aware that BSE exists anyway in continental Europe? What can my right hon. Friend do to promote the export of Welsh black cattle to Europe as a valuable earner of deutschmarks?

Sir Wyn Roberts: Of course, I am aware of the difficulties that the restrictions on exporting cattle, put into place as a result of BSE, have brought for many producers, and I sympathise with their position. However, the prohibition on the export of live cattle over six months old applies to all breeds of cattle and as Welsh blacks are among the breed types that have had confirmed cases of BSE, we are not likely to be able to advance the case for special treatment for that breed alone. Although a few cases of BSE have been confirmed in some member states, they are all isolated cases which are linked to feedstuffs imported from the United Kingdom. Exports to other member states are likely to remain restricted for some time yet.

Energy Efficiency

7. **Mr. Dafis:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much money has been allocated by his Department to promote energy efficiency within housing in Wales in each of the last five years.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: It is for local councils to decide how much of the money that is given to them is allocated to energy efficiency schemes for housing.

Mr. Dafis: That is a disappointing response. I hope that, following the remarkable rally on Saturday in Cardiff by Friends of the Earth, the Minister recognises that there is now a formidable coalition in favour of energy efficiency, from social and environmental groups that see the issue as not only addressing the problem of pollution, but enabling people to bring about reductions of as much as 30 per cent. in their fuel bills, while providing important savings in other areas. Will the Minister now join me in congratulating neighbourhood energy action and its contractors on its excellent work? Does he agree that there needs to be a comprehensive programme in the area, which should be a central issue of economic policy as a way in which to bring it to fruition?

Mr. Jones: I should thank the hon. Gentleman for effectively endorsing the lead that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave at the Earth summit in Rio. It behoves all of us to achieve energy efficiency, in the interests of Britain and of the globe generally.

Mr. Alan W. Williams: Rather than putting VAT on fuel and causing hypothermia among elderly people in the winter, why do not the Government introduce a comprehensive home insulation programme? It would have a rapid payback, in perhaps four or five years, and it would help to keep people warm in the winter rather than cause hardship.

Mr. Jones: I can reassure the hon. Gentleman that we are already seeking to carry out such a programme. In our estates partnership programme, it is a requirement that energy efficiency should be considered. Housing for Wales is this week publishing a new consultation document which looks for improved energy efficiency schemes in housing association developments.

Job Safeguards

8. **Mr. Flynn:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what new proposals he has to safeguard jobs in Wales.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The way in which to safeguard jobs is to ensure a steady economic recovery and sustainable growth. Our strategy—low inflation and sound public finances—does just that. We are also pressing ahead with our policies on deregulation, on encouraging enterprise, and on fighting for open and competitive markets.

Mr. Flynn: Why is the Welsh Office standing by watching so many winning Welsh teams being wrecked? I refer, for example, to the jobs in the brilliantly successful Du Pont group in Pontypool. The Patent Office in Newport is under threat although it has just been awarded a chartermark. Does not the Minister realise that many of the regional policy successes are likely to be destroyed by the Government's mania for privatising everything? Will he give a guarantee today that if privatisation goes ahead, none of the jobs that have come to Wales, such as those at DVOIT in Swansea, the Accounts Services Agency and the Patent Office, will be relocated outside Wales?

Sir Wyn Roberts: The hon. Gentleman is aware that his question about the Patent Office in his constituency is a matter for the Department of Trade and Industry and for the President of the Board of Trade. The hon. Gentleman talked about getting rid of jobs. He did not mention all the jobs that have come into Wales. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State talked of today's announcement from Sega. Over the past few weeks, we have had announcements about Hamilton Oil at Connah's Quay in north Wales, and further jobs created by Asat and Aiwa in south Wales.

Mr. Matthew Banks: Does my right hon. Friend agree that one of the best things that the Government can do to safeguard jobs in Wales is to continue the polices of promoting the right economic climate, which have been so successful in promoting existing businesses as well as attracting new business opportunities?

Sir Wyn Roberts: My hon. Friend is quite right and I am reminded that Wales continues to get 20 per cent. of the United Kingdom's inward investment. It is worth remembering also that some 40 per cent. of European investment from outside Europe comes in to the United Kingdom. Our job is to continue that good work and to support the companies that have come here. I am delighted to say that we are doing that through the export missions that we are leading abroad.

Mr. Donald Anderson: Will the Minister look with great care at the special problems of the construction industry in Wales, which is now flat on its back and has many jobs haemorrhaging? Surely that industry is heavily dependent on the public sector. Is there not a real danger that, in the Budget, there will be a twofold pressure on the construction industry, both from national ordering and local government ordering as a result of the pressure on local government expenditure? Will he look at the problems of the construction industry, which can create or destroy so many jobs?

Sir Wyn Roberts: The hon. Gentleman realises only too well that a considerable public sector capital programme exists in Wales. One of the areas for which I am responsible—roads in Wales—is running at a record level of some £200 million a year. Like the Chancellor, I am in the Budget purdah, but I am sure that, unlike the Labour party in the 1970s, we shall seek to protect capital spending even if it means cutting revenue spending.

Mr. John Marshall: Does my right hon. Friend accept that inward investment in Wales would be killed if we introduced a national minimum wage or signed the social charter? Is not it significant that those who seek to sell Wales short will destroy the Welsh economy by the restrictions that they suggest?

Sir Wyn Roberts: The Government are accustomed to hearing Opposition right hon. and hon. Members run down Wales. My hon. Friend is absolutely right. On the one hand, they complain about wage levels in Wales, even though since 1990 wage levels in Wales have been rising at a faster rate than in the rest of Great Britain. At the same time, they argue for the minimum wage, which would certainly be a cause of increased unemployment in Wales.

Mr. Rowlands: Is it not the case that the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessors have failed hopelessly to safeguard jobs in the south Wales coal mining industry? There are no pits or jobs left in communities such as mine, which has resulted in 40 per cent. of men being either out of work or economically inactive. What new initiative does

he have to create male jobs and male employment? The right hon. Gentleman should not just wave glossy brochures, which do not contain a new initiative in that respect.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Before the hon. Gentleman denigrates the valleys initiative, he should remember that, were it not for that initiative in 1988, we should be 10,000 jobs the poorer in south Wales. He must understand that the programme, which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has just extended, means £1 billion of investment in the south Welsh valleys. That will improve the quality of life for the people of the valleys and bring in new jobs.

Mr. Ron Davies: That is an untrue and utterly outrageous claim. In every travel-to-work area in the region covered by the valleys initiative, unemployment rose during the time of that initiative.

I draw the attention of the Minister to a speech made by the Secretary of State for Wales at Cliveden on 30 September, when he said:

"in the European Community, a single currency would be bad news."

How does the Minister think that that can be reconciled with the European summit decision of last week to press ahead with full economic and monetary union and what Helmut Kohl described as a "very personal commitment" from the British Prime Minister? Is it not clear that there is a massive difference of opinion between the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister? Given that the Secretary of State has lost all credibility, how does he think that he will safeguard his own job, let alone that of anybody else in Wales?

Sir Wyn Roberts: I am sure that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State can safeguard himself as well as his job.

On the hon. Gentleman's first point about unemployment in the valleys, United Kingdom unemployment is now more than 24 per cent. higher than it was in 1988 when the first programme began, but in the valleys it is 4·5 per cent. lower, which means that there are 10,000 more people at work in the valleys than there would have been had we followed the national trend.

As to the hon. Gentleman's comments about the events of last week, I am sure that it is right that we should be at the heart of Europe. We understand only too well that arguments about the future course of Europe will proceed and will be with us for a long time to come.

Cereals

9. **Mr. Roger Evans:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what criteria he proposes to adopt to identify specialist cereal growers for the purposes of the cereals regime in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: I announced on Friday the arrangements that I propose for 1993-94—a division into two regions based on land suitability for growing winter cereals, and cropping patterns in the 1989-91 growing years.

Mr. Evans: I thank my right hon. Friend for that announcement, but the criteria are complex. Why could he not have approached the matter on the basis of simply identifying individual farms?

Mr. Redwood: The European Community regulation does not permit us to single out individual specialist growers or farms for support. I hope that when my hon. Friend studies the detail he will see that we have endeavoured to produce the right answers on covering specialist growers in the map that we sketched. As my hon. Friend will have noticed, we are out to consultation on the thrust of the matter of the proposals, so if he has a hard case or a difficulty, I hope that he will make his representations either to me or to the Welsh divisional office, which will be only too willing to help his farmers or those in the constituencies of other hon. Members.

Local Government Commissioner

10. **Mr. Thurnham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received about the latest report from the Local Government Commissioner; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: None.

Mr. Thurnham: Is my hon. Friend aware that the ombudsman's report contains 10 pages of criticism of maladministration by council housing departments? Does he agree that the Government have done more than any Government to boost private home ownership? Is he further aware that the Opposition now have a policy document saying that the private rented sector badly needs a boost?

Mr. Jones: I acknowledge my hon. Friend's point about the Opposition's deathbed conversion to the importance of the private rented sector. Equally, I acknowledge what my hon. Friend said about bad practice in Welsh local authorities. We have been concerned about that for some time. In our agenda for action on housing, we gave a strong warning against political interference, and earlier this year we embarked on a consultation exercise into the housing allocation policies of all councils. We are now considering the replies to that exercise.

Mr. Roy Hughes: If only to safeguard the future of local government, will the Minister sack the inspector who awarded costs against Newport borough council for refusing permission to the American concern Browning Ferris for another waste disposal plant? Will he appreciate that the commissar-like attitude is alien to our democratic traditions in Wales and that the elected councillors were only acting in line with the wishes of the electors?

Mr. Jones: Matters such as that referred to by the hon. Gentleman would be considered in the proper quarters. The inspectors are charged with carrying out inquiries, and they do so to the best of their abilities.

Mr. Jonathan Evans: Does my hon. Friend agree that the report of the local government commissioners illustrates the way in which national institutions are exposing wrongdoing, even by elected local government councillors? Does my hon. Friend also think that the report, touching as it does on one of the local authorities in my local area and other authorities represented by Opposition Members, demonstrates the need for the Government to deal urgently with the issue of housing allocation?

Mr. Jones: I could not agree more with my hon. Friend. He is right in saying that Parliament gives scrutiny to that which needs to be scrutinised. A most amusing suggestion

which I saw recently was that some examples underline the importance of having a parliament for Wales. I thought that that was really saying that the Opposition is totally ineffective in scrutiny.

European Community

11. **Mr. Win Griffiths:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he last met the leaders of local government in Wales to discuss EC matters; and what issues were raised.

Mr. Redwood: I last met leaders of local government on 31 October, when I discussed with them structural funds issues and EC initiatives generally.

Mr. Griffiths: In those discussions, did the local government leaders point out that more than £45 million of European regional development fund money will be lost to local authorities because of the capping policies of the Welsh Office and the Government? Will the Welsh Office and the Secretary of State now take action to revise the rules to enable local authorities in Wales to utilise fully the money available from Europe for economic and industrial regeneration?

Mr. Redwood: I am keen to see that local authorities take the maximum advantage; that is why we changed the system and made it transparent. We have made the credit approvals available for those projects which go ahead. I am working closely with local government to see that it gets the maximum benefit from the system.

Mr. Barry Jones: Has the Secretary of State received queries from local government about European moneys for next year's roads budget for Wales? Will the right hon. Gentleman assure me that the multi-million pound River Dee crossing scheme will begin next April as promised and that the great road project will not fall victim to the Chancellor's axe in terms of spending next year? Does he appreciate that the building of the crossing is urgently needed on Deeside?

Mr. Redwood: I understand that need and I will do the best that I can when I put together the Budget for Wales following the Chancellor's statement. I will take the hon. Gentleman's representations fully into account. He will understand that I cannot give him a 100 per cent. guarantee on any item for next year because we have not yet completed the Budget process.

Incomes

12. **Mr. Ainger:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the average per capita income in the counties of Dyfed and Gwynedd in 1992 compared with *(a)* the Welsh average, *(b)* the United Kingdom average and *(c)* the European average in cash and percentage terms.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The latest available data are for 1990, using gross domestic product per head as the measure. For Dyfed, the per capita income was 13·6 per cent. below the Welsh average, 28·1 per cent. below the United Kingdom average and 27·6 per cent. below the EC average. The corresponding figures for Gwynedd were 1·3 per cent., 17·9 per cent. and 17·3 per cent., respectiveiy.

For the international comparison purposes, GPD per head is calculated in purchasing power units, not in cash terms. This cancels out price differences between member states. In 1990, the GDP per head figures for Dyfed, Gwynedd, Wales, the United Kingdom and the EC were 10,484, 11,977, 12,131, 14,583 and 14,488 units, respectively.

Mr. Ainger: The Minister's reply confirms my worst fears that Dyfed and Gwynedd are among the lowest areas in Europe. From the figures given by the right hon. Gentleman, it would appear that we have the highest levels of poverty and unemployment.

Will the Minister assure me that the review being undertaken within the Welsh Development Agency will include no reduction in the efforts of the agency in trying to improve the situation in the rural parts of Dyfed and of Gwynedd? Does the Minister accept that rumours are circulating that there may be significant cuts in the rural initiative currently being undertaken by the WDA? Will he assure the House that that will not take place, bearing in mind the figures that he has just announced?

Sir Wyn Roberts: We should perhaps also bear it in mind that the cost of living in Wales may be rather lower than in other parts of the country. We should certainly bear it in mind that Wales is one of the most beautiful parts of Europe. I remind the hon. Gentleman of what I said earlier —that since April 1990, earnings have risen by some 21·2 per cent. in Wales compared with 20·4 per cent. in Great Britain. So we are making progress. Of course, it is very much in our interests and it is one of our ends and objectives to raise income levels in Wales.

As for west Wales and the Welsh Development Agency, the hon. Gentleman will be aware of the announcement made in January, which included the upgrading of urban development activities, enhanced rural development facilities in the area, enhanced marketing by the Wales tourist board, improved services to the local business community, and the appointment of an executive to promote inward investment in the area. Two of the travel-to-work areas—Fishguard and Haverfordwest—were upgraded to development area status.

The hon. Gentleman's point about the WDA is a matter for the WDA, but I am sure that it, and we in Government, will bear the hon. Gentleman's thoughts in mind. We are as anxious as he is to do our best by west Wales.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Bishops' Pay

27. **Mr. Harry Greenway:** To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners what submissions the Church Commissioners have had concerning proposed pay and allowances for bishops with extra-territorial jurisdiction; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Alison (Second Church Estates Commissioner, representing the Church Commissioners): The Act of Synod will provide for the appointment of up to three new suffragan bishops to act as provincial episcopal visitors. Their remuneration will be the same as that of other suffragan bishops. Housing and a car will be provided and working expenses will be reimbursed.

Mr. Greenway: Will my right hon. Friend give an assurance to the House that the Church Commissioners will bear in mind the great concern expressed by the House

in last Friday's debate that priests and congregations committed to a male priesthood be properly looked after when females—ladies—are ordained as priests in a few months' time? Will he give an assurance that the Act of Synod measure which deals with the matter will give proper moral and real authority to those bishops committed to protecting those congregations and to serving them?

Mr. Alison: I am delighted that my hon. Friend has underscored the need for the co-called Act of Synod to have real teeth and real moral authority. I shall convey the anxiety that my hon. Friend has expressed to the General Synod when it meets at Church house next week to discuss the very point that my hon. Friend has raised. The Synod will underscore the need for an Act which is adequate. If it is not adequate, the House will insist that a Measure be brought before the House to create a statutory provision.

Mr. Frank Field: What action does the Estates Commission intend to take on the line in the Lambeth report about the scandalous loss of Church Commissioners' assets which said that the fastest growing area of expenditure was bishops' residences?

Mr. Alison: The bishops, led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, have launched a first diagnostic analysis of the funds and finances of the Church Commissioners. The New Testament utterance, "Physician, heal thyself", will be only too readily applied by those who have initiated this physicians' diagnosis.

Sunday Trading

28. **Mr. Shersby:** To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners what is the policy of the Church Commissioners towards the investment of their funds in firms which trade on Sundays.

Mr. Alison: We believe that the law should be observed. We have expressed our concern to major retailing companies in which we invest and we shall continue to monitor developments.

Mr. Shersby: Is my right hon. Friend aware that many of the retailing firms in which the Church Commissioners invest have indicated to their Members of Parliament, including myself, that their preference is for option 2—the proposals of the Sunday Shopping Hours Reform Council —which would allow larger shops to open for six hours and smaller ones to open all day? Will my right hon. Friend be kind enough to bear that in mind and to convey the information that I have given the House today to the Church Commissioners?

Mr. Alison: I am delighted to hear from my hon. Friend that so large a number of retailers fall into the category that he has just designated. It is my hope and expectation that the group that he has specified will be able to co-ordinate that approach with the group that I personally support—the Keep Sunday Special group. I hope that, between us, we shall have a framework of law which offers full but generous and reasonable regulation for Sunday trading. Of course, the Church Commissioners are there to observe the law, not in any way to attempt to make it. We shall observe it through our shopping retail outlets as assiduously as possible as soon as the law is as clear as possible.

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Northern Ireland

36. **Mr. Trimble:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will make a statement on judicial appointments in Northern Ireland.

The Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department (Mr. John M. Taylor): The Lord Chancellor is responsible for a wide range of judicial appointments in Northern Ireland. His policy is to appoint to each judicial post the candidate, who appears to him to be best qualified regardless of gender, ethnic origin, political affiliation or religion.

Mr. Trimble: I must ask the Minister for further assurances in this matter in view of a rather disturbing incident that I heard about recently whereby a Roman Catholic barrister practising in Northern Ireland was approached by an Irish civil servant—a civil servant in the employ of the Republic of Ireland—and asked if he would be interested in taking a specific judicial appointment. I hasten to add that the appointment was not one within the gift of the Lord Chancellor. In view of that incident, which was improper, I ask the Minister to be sure that there is no interference by the Irish Republic in judicial appointments at any level. Can he ensure that the merit principle is properly vindicated and that there is no dilution in the quality of the Northern Ireland judiciary for political considerations?

Mr. Taylor: The hon. Gentleman takes me by surprise in this matter. He will not be surprised if I say that, not knowing, I have not been briefed, either. Now that he has put the matter in the public domain by raising it on the Floor of the House, if he wants to write to me indicating whatever terms—confidential or open—I will certainly look into it for him.

Magistrates

37. **Mr. Harry Greenway:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department how many magistrates are currently aged 25 years or less; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The answer to my hon. Friend's question is none. It is rare for anyone below the age of 27 to be appointed. However, there is no bar to appointment, and a 26-year-old has recently been appointed.

Mr. Greenway: Will my hon. Friend bear in mind the great gulf that seems to exist between young offenders and the magistracy, and that the best discipline in schools, in my long experience of schools, comes from that administered to children by their peers? They make the wisest and fairest decisions and ones that are most respected by other children. Does my hon. Friend agree that younger magistrates are needed to cope with the current problems of juvenile crime—and end the fuddy-duddy approach of some of the older magistrates and judges in this area? *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Taylor: Clearly, the House is not of one mind on this subject. However, it may like some information. No figures are kept on the ages of appointment of magistrates, but a recent sample of 875 new appointments showed—

this may surprise the House—that 22 per cent. were under 40, 33 per cent. between 40 and 45, 24 per cent. between 46 and 50, and 21 per cent. 51 and over. I found that evenness of spread quite healthy.

Mr. Janner: Does the Minister agree that what matters with the judiciary, whether magistrates or judges, is not age but whether they have ordinary common sense and administer justice properly? For example, the Lord Chancellor may have information on the age of Judge Prosser who saw fit to say that a well-known disease, repetitive strain injury, did not exist and should not be on the medical casebooks. Surely we could have some indication of the Lord Chancellor's approach to that sort of case, whatever the age of the judge or magistrate.

Mr. Taylor: In the case of magistrates, I think that personal suitability is fairly well defined as good character and repute and the ability to command the confidence of both the public and colleagues. As for judges, which the question is not about, there are already arrangements under which unfit judges may retire on health grounds whatever their age. [HON. MEMBERS: "RSI?"] Meanwhile, the Royal Commission has considered the appraisal of judges, and its recommendations will be considered in due course.

Sir Ivan Lawrence: Is it not obvious that age and experience are important matters in the selection of judges, and that it cannot be for the confidence of the British people that young, inexperienced and immature magistrates are making judgments in serious matters? The Government's policy sounds sensible and intelligent—provided that a higher proportion of magistrates in the middle age range are selected.

Mr. Taylor: I had already reached the same conclusion about the virtues of the Government as my hon. and learned Friend. I shall take account of what he says about maturity. Plainly, maturity and experience are qualities that should be sought, but we do not want a bench on which there is no younger representation.

Media Coverage—Judges

38. **Mr. Soley:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what plans he has to issue guidance to courts on the effect of media coverage on trials.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The existing legislation on reporting of court proceedings is clear. I have no plans, nor has the Lord Chancellor, to issue guidance to the judiciary who, independent of the Government, apply the legislation for which my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department has responsibility.

Mr. Soley: Is not the Minister missing the point? He must be aware of the case of the Taylor sisters who appealed successfully because of inaccurate media coverage. He will be aware of the police officers in the Birmingham Six case. Surely it is time to expect the media to report not only accurately but impartially between prosecution and defence so that press freedom is not sacrificed for wrongful conviction and vice versa.

Mr. Taylor: I respect the hon. Gentleman for his past work in these areas and no doubt I shall respect his present and future work. He invites me to speak about the Birmingham Six police case. In many ways, that case was wholly exceptional. The decision was entirely for the trial judge. However, in staying the proceedings the judge held that the combination of delay, adverse publicity and the impossibility of isolating the very narrow prosecution case from the much wider matrix of events from 1975 was such as to render a fair trial impossible.

Mr. Maclennan: Is the Minister aware that there are severe restraints on academic examination of juries' attitudes, and that it would be helpful in considering this matter to have greater knowledge of how juries work and think? Will he look at the possibility of opening the work of juries to academic consideration?

Mr. Taylor: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his question. The deliberations on the Runciman report would provide exactly the right context in which to take the issue forward, as the hon. Gentleman would like to do.

Mr. John Marshall: My hon. Friend will have seen the coverage of the Austin Donellan case. Does he agree that in such cases the defendant should have the same right of anonymity, at least until proved guilty, as the victim of such crimes quite rightly deserves?

Mr. Taylor: I am well aware of these arguments. I thank my hon. Friend for raising the matter and advise him that my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department has asked his officials to undertake a review of the question of anonymity in rape cases and in other sexual cases and of the interests of both parties in such cases.

Judges

39. **Mr. Skinner:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will introduce measures for the election of judges.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The answer is no. The Government do not consider that elections would provide a suitable basis for appointment or be compatible with the principle of judicial independence.

Mr. Skinner: The Government did not say that about trade union leaders, who they said were out of touch with their members and should be subject to re-election every five years. How else can we make judges accountable, especially in the light of what they have said recently about rape cases and repetitive strain injury——

Dame Elaine Kellet-Bowman: Ask a question.

Mr. Skinner: I have already asked two questions.

It is high time that the Government introduced a system of accountability, but they will not do so because too many people in this place, especially those on the Tory Benches, are part and parcel of the judiciary—barristers, solicitors and all the rest of them. That is the real reason why the Government do not want accountability.

Mr. Taylor: The hon. Gentleman may be surprised to find that I have an answer that may half oblige him——

Mr. Skinner: Let us hear it then.

Mr. Taylor: I am about to give the answer. The Royal Commission has considered the appraisal of judges and its recommendations will be deliberated upon. That represents some new thinking, which I believe will be welcome on both sides of the Chamber.

Mr. Jessel: If we are to avoid the election of judges, is not the corollary that judges must show that they broadly respect both public policy and public opinion? Is it not unhelpful when two such leading figures as the Lord Chief Justice and the Master of the Rolls are in open disagreement about what the law should be? Should not the Lord Chancellor ask them to desist from such pronouncements?

Mr. Taylor: There are conventions in the House about commenting on judges and what judges may say. Hon. Members may feel that this is an occasion on which to make such comments, but I am not sure that a member of the Executive should intrude into a matter of judicial independence.

Mr. Boateng: While the Minister and his Department have responsibility for the appointment of judges, and at a time of record levels of public concern about crime and the commission or criminal offences, is it not worrying that one day last months 24 courts in the south-east of England were closed for want of work? At the same time, on one day at the beginning of last month at the Snaresbrook crown court, offences of conspiracy to supply heroin and cocaine and offences involving arson with intent to endanger life were not heard because of a shortage of judges—there being insufficient money to pay for recorders or assistant recorders. Is not the Minister's Department presiding over a rather bizarre position, and what does he intend to do about it?

Mr. Taylor: It is not true that Crown courts are standing idle, although some sittings have been reduced to reflect the downturn in receipts for trial. Sittings will be restored later in the year if receipts increase. Sitting days have been reduced by only 2 per cent. compared with last year, despite a reduction in receipts of more than 15 per cent. in the first quarter of this year.

Freemasonry

40. **Mr. Mullin:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what plans he has to make freemasonry a publicly declarable interest for members of the judiciary; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The Lord Chancellor has no plans to make freemasonry a publicly declarable interest for members of the judiciary.

Mr. Mullin: Does the Minister agree that there is nothing more corrosive of public confidence in the judiciary than the knowledge that many judges and magistrates are members of a secret society, one of whose aims is mutual self-advancement?

Mr. Taylor: I have answered a similar question from the hon. Gentleman in the past. The critical thing about the judge's appointment is that he takes a judicial oath. [HON. MEMBERS: "Or she."] I beg the House's pardon—or she.

The judge takes a judicial oath which binds him to consider any interest that he may have, to observe whether it could conflict with any matter before him and to excuse himself from the bench if he considers that there is such a conflict of interest.

Petty Sessional Divisions

41. **Mr. Roger Evans:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what criteria are being adopted for the amalgamation of petty sessional divisions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The optimum size of a division would be one that permitted an average annual attendance for magistrates of between 35 and 40 sittings.

Mr. Evans: Will my hon. Friend reconsider his reply and emphasise much more significantly the importance of providing local courts for the convenience of local witnesses and local parties? The insistence on a certain number of sittings is a criterion which ignores the factor of convenience to the public.

Mr. Taylor: The proposals that the Lord Chancellor has made are so far indicative only. Consultation will follow if a local view emerges which is held to be an improvement. I share with my hon. Friend, however, the opinion that the criteria for amalgamating petty sessional divisions are different from the criteria for the amalgamation of magistrates courts committee areas. He asked about the former and my earlier reply was about that.

European Council (Special Meeting)

3.30 pm

The Prime Minister (Mr. John Major): With permission, I shall make a statement about the special meeting of the European Council in Brussels on 29 October, which I attended with my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, and also about my separate meeting in Brussels with the Irish Prime Minister. The documents issued by the European Council and the joint statement that I issued with the Taoiseach have both been placed in the Library of the House.

Agreement was reached at the European Council on a number of important points. It was decided that, later this month, Finance Ministers would consider a draft White Paper by the European Commission, setting out proposals on growth, competitiveness and employment. The United Kingdom has already put forward suggestions for that White Paper. The European Council renewed its commitment to secure a global commitment in the Uruguay round before the December deadline. The Council agreed to provide extra help to small and medium-sized businesses by widening the criteria for loans by the European investment bank.

The future location of a number of European Community institutions was decided. Some of those decisions were long overdue. Of the main institutions, it was agreed that the headquarters of the European Monetary Institute will be in Germany, the European Medicines Evaluation Agency in the United Kingdom, Europol in the Netherlands and the Trade Marks Office in Spain. The decision on the European Medicines Evaluation Agency should reinforce Britain's position as the centre of the European pharmaceutical industry.

On Bosnia, the Council agreed to try to improve access for aid supplies as winter approaches. We are seeking credible assurances from the warring factions that they will not block access routes. The Council is also looking for more funding and troop contributions from outside the European Community, to supplement the huge efforts made, in particular, by Britain and by France. Work on the further Yugoslavia was identified as one possible area for joint action in foreign policy. The European Council also asked Foreign Ministers to consider joint action in support of the middle east peace process and to contribute to election monitoring by the United Nations in South Africa and in Russia.

Under the interior and justice pillar, the Council asked Ministers to bring forward proposals for co-operation in the fight against international crime and drugs, and over asylum and immigration problems. We agreed that the Europol drugs unit should be up and running within 12 months.

No one at the council was in any doubt that our highest priority is to restore sustainable, non-inflationary growth and to increase employment across the Community. I argued that the European Community had to confront its own structural weaknesses, which had led to a falling share of world markets and, by comparison with the OECD average, the loss of an estimated 9 million jobs since 1980. The quickest boost to growth and employment will be to secure a GATT agreement. It was also generally agreed that the Community needed to make its labour markets more flexible, to cut red tape nationally and in Brussels, to encourage investment and to create the right climate for new and growing businesses.

I believe that economic convergence is a helpful objective for each Community member state. It will assist in keeping inflation and interest rates as low as possible, as well as controlling public borrowing and debt.

In our discussions, I again made clear that I considered the timetable for economic and monetary union stage 3 —a stage to which we are, of course, not committed—to be unrealistic. Public opinion and the recession have changed attitudes within the Community. Subsidiarity, for example, now has very strong support. During the past two years, the European Commission has halved the number of proposals that it has brought forward for new Community rules and regulations. In December, we shall be looking for specific proposals to cut back existing European Community law. There is increasing emphasis on inter-governmental co-operation, with decisions taken by consensus on both foreign and home affairs. We operate by agreement and not only through the treaty of Rome and the European Commission.

The European Council concerned to respond to criticisms that arose throughout Europe during the debate on the Maastricht treaty.

The Council declared:

"We wish to introduce greater transparency, openness and decentralisation in our procedures. We want a Europe close to the citizen and intervening only where necessary to pursue our common interests."

We have argued long and hard for that approach within the Community, and I thoroughly welcome it.

Following the European Concil meeting, I had a bilateral discussion with the Irish Prime Minister. Mr. Reynolds gave me an account of the report given to him by the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume), together with the assessment that the Irish Government have made in the light of it. He did not pass the report itself to me. We acknowledged the courageous efforts made by the hon. Member for Foyle, but agreed that the report could not in itself be a basis for action.

We agreed that the two Governments should continue to work together on the following basis: Northern Ireland's situation should never be changed by violence or the threat of violence; any settlement must depend on consent, freely given; negotiations on a settlement could only involve constitutional politicians; there could be no secret agreement or understanding between Governments or organisations supporting violence as a price for its cessation; and those claiming a serious interest in advancing the cause of peace in Ireland should renounce the use of, or support for, violence. If and when such a renunciation of violence had been made, and had been sufficiently demonstrated, new doors could open, and both Governments would wish to respond to the new situation which would then arise.

The terrible events in Northern Ireland since our meeting last Friday have further underlined the urgent need for that process to succeed. As the House will know, last Saturday evening, two gunmen fired indiscriminately in a crowded bar in Greysteel, County Londonderry. Seven people died, ranging in age from 19 to 81, and 11 more were injured. A claim of responsibility for that appalling act was subsequently made by the Ulster Freedom Fighters.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary, who acted with exemplary speed and skill, have arrested nine people in connection with the attack. That, like the Shankill road bombing and the six other terrorist murders in Northern Ireland last week, was a barbarous and despicable attack on innocent and peaceful civilians. The whole House will wish to extend its profound sympathy to the victims' families and friends.

Less than 24 hours later, an RUC officer was shot and critically injured in Newry. That once again reminds us of the enormous debt that we owe to the brave men and women of that force.

Those murders will bring the terrorists no advantage, but only the prospect of long years in prison. Terrorism will not alter the constitutional guarantee that we have given the people of Northern Ireland. It will not defeat the security forces, and it will not deflect us from the search for a fair and lasting peace.

The joint statement with the Irish Prime Minister provides a clear basis for progress. Both Governments are committed to the talks process. The principle of consent must be at the heart of any settlement—as the Irish Deputy Prime Minister made clear last week, when he acknowledged the rights of Unionists to give or to withhold that consent. That clearly points to constitutional reform in the Irish Republic at the right time and in the right circumstances.

The Government will now intensify their efforts to find a basis for the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland to carry on the talks progress. My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will hold further discussions with the Irish Deputy Prime Minister in a meeting at the Intergovernmental Conference later this week. We are determined to do all that we can to bring peace to Northern Ireland. The further killings that occurred over the weekend make that search for peace all the more urgent.

Mr. John Smith (Monklands, East): I thank the right hon. Gentleman for making a statement on both aspects. I welcome the European Council's confirmation of the enlargement timetable for Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden so that negotiations are completed by March 1994 and accession by 1 January 1995. I welcome also the commitment to achieving within the timetable a successful conclusion to the GATT talks, and the initiative proposed for closer police co-operation under Europol.

As to the economic aspect, given the depressing realities of the economic situation in the Community, with 17 million unemployed, and with any recovery in Britain at best patchy and fragile, why is there not a greater sense of urgency on the part of the United Kingdom Government and other member states in taking more effective action to stimulate their economies and to bring down unemployment?

With the Bundesbank having begun to reduce its interest rates, is there not a strong case for co-ordinating interest rates cuts across the Community—not least in this country, where manufacturing output has fallen and the construction industry remains dangerously weak? Although we welcome the modest extra help to small and medium-sized businesses that was promised at the European Council meeting, can the Prime Minister explain why initiatives agreed as long ago as last year's Edinburgh summit have not yet been acted upon?

The right hon. Gentleman will recall that it was agreed at that summit to establish a European investment fund in addition to the increased facilities available through the European investment bank. He will be aware also that, for the European investment bank to establish the new fund, it will be necessary to amend the new protocol to the treaty of Rome. Can the Prime Minister explain why, nearly one year after the Edinburgh summit, that has not been done by the United Kingdom and other member states? Will he give the House an undertaking that there will be no more delay in pursuing an initiative for which he claimed credit at Edinburgh?

Will the Prime Minister explain why his Government are denying to areas of high unemployment and industrial decline in the United Kingdom more than £300 million of European funding because of spending restrictions on local authorities—an approach which is locking this country out of desperately needed investment funds? Will the right hon. Gentleman explain why, when his policy was to have Britain at the heart of Europe, the European Monetary Institute is to be placed at the heart of Germany? How will he explain to the City of London that latest triumph of his negotiating skills? Perhaps it is a case of game, set and match to the Bundesbank.

On Bosnia, what evidence is there that the declaration will have any significant impact on Serbian and Croatian aggression? Why did the Council not insist on making effective United Nations Security Council resolution 824 on safe areas in Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia? Will the airlift be significantly increased to provide desperately needed winter aid to the starving people of Bosnia?

I join the Prime Minister in condemning without reservation the atrocities committed by the so-called Ulster Freedom Fighters in Greysteel, County Londonderry. Let me also express our concern at the shooting of an RUC officer in Newry by the IRA. Does the right hon. Gentleman recognise that these latest outrages have increased the powerful feeling, in Great Britain as well as on both sides of the border in Ireland, that efforts to find a political way forward must be pursued with renewed intensity? Is it not abundantly clear that a cessation of the horrific violence is what is passionately desired by the overwhelming majority in both Great Britain and Ireland?

For our part, we would welcome an early resumption of the talks process. We believe that the elected representatives of the people of Northern Ireland have a moral obligation to return to the negotiating table without preconditions. Any resumption of the talks, however, should take place within the previous three-strand structure, and on the principle that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.

However, while efforts to persuade the parties to return to the talks will proceed, the two Governments have a responsibility to the peoples of these islands to attempt to develop their own institutional framework for peace. I urge the Government to examine carefully the broad thrust of the six principles outlined by the Irish Deputy Prime Minister; they must accept, however, that those principles contain a fine balance between nationalist and Unionist aspirations, which should not be destroyed by their being treated selectively.

Opposition Members recognise the courageous and imaginative work undertaken by the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume). We also recognise the political and

[Mr. John Smith]

personal risks that he has taken—not just recently, but over a long period—in an attempt to bring peace to the troubled situation.

May I suggest to the Prime Minister that, whatever progress is made in talks between the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom Government and the Government of the Republic must continue to consider ways forward, and not hesitate to develop proposals themselves which could be put to the other parties. The public in both Britain and Ireland are looking in the first instance to their Governments to make and sustain a new initiative for peace.

The Prime Minister: The right hon. and learned Gentleman touched on a large number of important points in my statement. I shall endeavour to respond to all his comments.

I am grateful to the right hon. and learned Gentleman for welcoming enlargement, for which there was strong support from all the Heads of Government at the European Community meeting. There was also support for a completion of the GATT talks by 15 December, police co-operation on Europol and the general efforts to deal with money laundering and organised crime.

As for the economic points that the right hon. and learned Gentleman made, 18 million people are indeed unemployed across the Community at present. It is estimated that that figure will reach 20 million as unemployment rises sharply, particularly in France and Spain, over the next 12 months. An urgent examination of the policies is indeed under way: that is precisely what the White Paper is doing. It will be considered by Finance Ministers in ECOFIN—the Economic and Finance Council—within the month, and then remitted to the Heads of Government for their meeting in Brussels on 9 December.

I think that there is scope for interest rate reductions in some countries in Europe; some have already been made. I said that when I spoke to the Heads of Government meeting on Friday last week. As for the initiative on the European investment fund, the right hon. and learned Gentleman is right to say that it needs legislative cover throughout the Community. Virtually no member state has yet completed the necessary legislative cover, but we shall be able to do so speedily. I look forward to support from the official Opposition when I present the legislation to the House. As for others, I cannot compel them to deal with it speedily, but I have told them in our discussions that I hope that they will be able to do so.

I assume that, in expressing concern about the £300 million, the right hon. and learned Gentleman is referring to European Community funds. We made it clear to the Commission that we expect European Community funds allocated to the United Kingdom to be taken up by the end of this calendar year—not the financial year.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman neglected to mention that many hundreds of jobs will come to London with the European Medicines Evaluation Agency, but I am sure that he will welcome the several hundred direct jobs and the large number of secondary jobs that will be created as a result of that institution coming here. The European Monetary Institute has gone to Germany. That was the consensus among the Community, and since we are not committed to stage 3, it is unsurprising that the consensus was that it should go elsewhere.

The activities of the Opposition last year did not help our negotiating position. *[Interruption.]* We will take their attitude to Europe seriously when they cease to obstruct European legislation that they claim to be in favour of. They speak with one voice in Europe but another in the Lobby.

I turn now to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's comments on Bosnia. He has a touching faith in declarations. I am bound to say that he is not dealing with entirely civilised men in Bosnia who are seeking to block the humanitarian aid. We are seeking to open corridors to ensure that we shall be able to get the aid through this winter. That will involve a massive effort. The strain of the effort thus far has been taken by the British and the French. We hope that others will make a larger contribution, and that point was made forcefully in our discussions after the last day.

I can agree with many of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's points on Northern Ireland. Like him, I would welcome an early resumption of the talks under the three-strand process. I am less concerned about the format than the fact of the talks, but it is desirable to get the fact of the talks under way as soon as possible.

There is a great deal in the Tanaiste's six principles with which we can agree—not all of them, but they are a helpful contribution to the debate, and I am happy to acknowledge that that is most certainly so. We wish to work with people to ensure that the talks process is a success. The Government would be willing, if others would find it helpful, to bring forward proposals to provide focus and direction for new talks once they begin. It is a hopeful sign that there seems to be a greater willingness to return to talks. I hope that that willingness will become a reality.

Mr. Norman Lamont (Kingston upon Thames): Is the Prime Minister aware that many people had seen this Council as an opportunity for greater realism on the part of the European Community? Will the Prime Minister explain to the House, given the views that he expressed in *The Economist*, given the break-up of the exchange rate mechanism, and given the views that he has expressed this afternoon about the timetable for monetary union, what is the purpose in going forward with a European Monetary Institute on the timetable envisaged in Maastricht? What will the EMI do? Are we not in danger of being drawn into a further bout of fantasy by the European Community, from which we shall find it difficult to extricate ourselves?

Secondly, there will be support on both sides of the House for the Prime Minister's initiative on Northern Ireland, but may I ask him for the assurance that there is no question of an amnesty for terrorists and no question of any negotiation with anyone who has been involved in terrorism in the past?

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. Before the Prime Minister responds, will he allow me to say that many hon. Members are seeking to ask questions? It will be impossible to call all of them unless questions are brisk and to the point, and answers equally so.

The Prime Minister: I shall deal with my right hon. Friend's second point first. There are no political prisoners anywhere in the United Kingdom, so the question of amnesties does not arise in any way.

On the European Monetary Institute, there is indeed much greater realism across the Community, as the declaration from which I quoted a few moments ago illustrates very clearly. As my right hon. Friend will know, stage 2 in no sense infringes our monetary sovereignty and, as he will also recall, stage 2, which was negotiated by myself and my right hon Friend, was included in the Maastricht treaty and in our domestic legislation, and that treaty and the domestic legislation require it to commence on 1 January.

Mr. Paddy Ashdown (Yeovil): It is a good thing that the Maastricht treaty is now at last in place, but it is, I regret, a bad thing that the Government, under the Prime Minister's leadership, have once again at this special Council led Europe in its retreat from its responsibilities in Bosnia a failure over which many lives will be lost and which will cause much misery in the coming winter.

On Northern Ireland, does the Prime Minister accept that, for whatever understandable reason, there has been a certain loss of political momentum following the breakdown of the cross-party talks a year ago? Does he agree that this is the moment when he and the Irish Taoiseach could take personal charge? I hope that his statement means that that is what they now intend to do.

Does the right hon. Gentleman also agree that the six principles outlined by Dick Spring offer not only an appropriate way forward but some reassurance for the Unionist cause, and that the most important thing that could be done now to give impetus to progress towards peace would be if those who represent the Unionist cause could find it possible to utter some welcome, however guarded and partial, for those principles?

The Prime Minister: I shall deal first with the right hon. Gentleman's remarks on Bosnia. I find his continuing criticism of what has been achieved by this country, our voluntary services and our troops in Bosnia to be contemptible, and I use the word advisedly. It is time that the right hon. Gentleman stopped grandstanding on this issue and learned some of the facts about Bosnia and the realities of what can be achieved.

On Northern Ireland, the Taoiseach and I certainly propose to take a very close interest in the development of these discussions. We are both committed to seeing a success and to doing everything that can realistically be done to bring an end to bloodshed and to bring peace to the people of Northern Ireland. I acknowledge again, as I did a few moments ago, the importance of the principles enunciated by the Irish Deputy Prime Minister a few days ago. They seem to suggest that, in the right circumstances, articles 2 and 3 can be repealed, or at least put to a referendum for repeal, in the Republic of Ireland. I think that that will be very reassuring and that it is a considerable contribution to the search for peace.

Mr. Peter Temple-Morris (Leominster): Does my right hon. Friend accept that the horrors of Northern Ireland place an awesome responsibility on him, on the Government and, indeed, on us all? Does he also accept that a settlement, or at least agreement on progress towards a settlement, would be an achievement of historic proportions for him and for his right hon. Friends?

The Prime Minister: I am grateful to my hon. Friend. I think that no one underestimates in any way the difficulties that lie in the way of progress in the present situation, but I do not believe that anyone who has observed what has happened in Northern Ireland—not only in the past three weeks, horrific though that has been, but in recent years—can be remotely satisfied with the status quo. Nothing that can realistically be done to bring peace and progress should be left undone.

Mr. John Hume (Foyle) *rose*——

Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Hume: May I join the Prime Minister in condemning the horrific slaughter in Greysteel on Saturday evening of so many decent people? May I also say that it is an insult to the memory of the decent people of the Shankill road who were murdered the previous week to use their murder as a reason for murdering others? Let no one be under any illusion: in a divided society, solutions can never be brought about by any form of violence or coercion.

Given that that has been my position and that of my party for the past terrible 25 years, I say that it is the responsibility of all people—especially Governments—to do everything in their power to try to resolve the conflict and bring the violence to an end.

Given that I say that, and note that throughout those 25 years 20,000 troops and 12,000 armed policemen on our streets and stringent security laws have not brought that peace; given that I take the responsibility, which is indeed mine, in circumstances in which I saw a real opportunity —and I mean my words—for achieving a total cessation of violence, which I say is the best opportunity that I have seen in 20 years; and given that the Prime Minister describes me in his statement as courageous and imaginative, why has the right hon. Gentleman rejected my proposals before he has talked to me about them?

The Prime Minister: I think that millions will agree entirely with the hon. Gentleman's remarks about Greysteel and Shankill. Nothing can justify the sort of action that we saw in Greysteel. As I indicated over the weekend, revenge simply breeds revenge—each death leads to another death—and that is no way forward for Northern Ireland.

May I repeat what I said in the statement? I have a great deal of admiration for the persistence and the courage with which the hon. Gentleman has, through many years, pursued a settlement in Northern Ireland. I have not always agreed with the way in which he has pursued that end, but I have always admired his courage and his determination to do so.

I have to make a judgment as to whether the actions that are taken will lead to the consent throughout every aspect of the community that is the irrevocable necessity if one is to have a settlement that will endure for a long period. I listened very carefully to what the Taoiseach had to say. The hon. Gentleman and I met some time ago. I believe that the hon. Gentleman has asked to see me again. I confirm to the hon. Gentleman that I am happy to meet him and I look forward to doing so, and to meeting also the leaders of the other constitutional parties in Northern Ireland. My door to them is open for constructive help towards reaching a settlement, from whatever source—any democratic source—it may come.

[The Prime Minister]

But I had to make a judgment on whether I thought that the proposals reached by the hon. Gentleman, at this time, and in the fashion that he proposed them, would actually lead to progress and to a settlement. I reached the conclusion—after having been informed of them by the Taoiseach, as we said in our statement over the weekend—that that was not the right way to proceed, and for that reason I said earlier today that I believe the way forward is the way set out in the joint statement that the Taoiseach and I issued on Friday.

Rev. Ian Paisley (Antrim, North): I should like to associate myself with what the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume) said in condemning without reservation all the murders that have been taking place in our land. There is no difference between the tears of Protestants and the tears of Roman Catholics. These murders come from hell and lead to hell and there can be no justification for them on any grounds whatever.

Is the Prime Minister aware that the people of Northern Ireland will be listening carefully to wht he is saying today? As he said in his statement that the document resulting from the Hume-Adams talks, as they are called, was not delivered to him but that the Taoiseach made some comments upon it, can he tell the House and the people of Northern Ireland what detail of that document led him to reject it? This House and the people of Northern Ireland should know that.

May I also tell the right hon. Gentleman that many people in Northern Ireland are alarmed by the communiqué that was issued, especially point 5:

"The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed that any initiative can be taken only by the two governments"?

Can the right hon. Gentleman explain to the people of Northern Ireland what difference there is between that and joint sovereignty? Surely the Government, and the right hon. Gentleman as Prime Minister, are the only people who can take an initiative in the internal affairs of Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister also told the House today that, when the time is ripe, there is going to be a change in the constitution of the South. The people of Northern Ireland will be asking the Prime Minister, now many more Shankill roads and Greysteels must we have to bring about the ripening of the time?

The Prime Minister: To an extent, the hon. Gentleman answered part of his own question in the second part of his question. We need a settlement that will last. I do not think that the hon. Member for Antrim, North (Rev. Ian Paisley), any more than I or any hon. Member, is simply looking for a short-term ceasefire. We are looking for a permanent cessation of violence. That is what we are seeking. That means that some of the action—for example, the action that will bring comfort in the North on articles 2 and 3—must necessarily be taken by the Government of the Republic of Ireland and not by us. It is right that we should work together to see whether we can produce peace in Northern Ireland.

So far as the document is concerned, I reiterate that I have not read it. Having spoken to the Taoiseach, I am aware of the document's contents. As I said to the hon. Member for Foyle, I made the judgment, on the basis of that, that I did not think that it would lead to consent across Ireland and should not therefore be proceeded with in the form in which it existed.

Mr. William Ross (Londonderry, East): The horrific assault at Greysteel in my constituency on Saturday night has rightly drawn down the universal condemnation of all right-thinking people in Northern Ireland and their public representatives. May I say to the Prime Minister that the people in the area were very glad to see the Secretary of State paying a visit there yesterday. He was very much welcomed.

That atrocious attack left seven people, most of whom were my constituents, dead. Does the Prime Minister understand that universal condemnation—welcome though that is—is not enough? Actions speak much louder than words. Did the Prime Minister therefore ask Mr. Reynolds to close down places like the Republican News Bureau in Dublin, from which all the statements by the IRA are issued?

Will the right hon. Gentleman now give the most careful attention to selective detention, to behead the terrorist organisations of their control and command structures? Before he starts that, will he read the excellent article that appeared in the Irish edition of *The Sunday Times* yesterday on that subject, which unfortunately was not printed in the British editions? That article will clarify everyone's thinking. Does the Prime Minister also agree that swift and vigorous action is now necessary to restore confidence and to get rid of the massive fear that exists throughout Northern Ireland?

The Prime Minister: The slaughter of the hon. Gentleman's constituents in Greysteel was unforgivable. I hope that he will understand and pass to his constituents the depth of sympathy that exists in this House and across the country for the people who suffered in that attack and for their families.

We are in constant contact with the Government of the Republic of Ireland about security matters. There have been substantial improvements in security co-operation and cross-border co-operation over recent years. That is a continuing programme. It is not something that is begun and ended. A whole range of matters are continually under discussion.

As for selective detention, I have noted the public debate on the arguments for and against internment. This is, of course, an option which remains open to the Government. It would not, I think, at the moment be appropriate for me to comment on the circumstances in which that option might necessarily be used. It is there, and I do not rule it out.

Sir James Kilfedder (North Down): I associate myself wholeheartedly with the political initative by the Prime Minister. With the Irish Republic's acceptance, if such be the case, that there can be no change in the constitutional position of Northern Ireland without the consent of the majority there, and the promised removal, if such be the case, of articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution, it would seem sensible and desirable that the talks between the constitutional parties should be resumed as soon as possible. Does my right hon. Friend agree that every public representative in Northern Ireland should now call upon the people unequivocally to support the security forces in their fight to defeat terrorism, which presents a bar to political progress?

The Prime Minister: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend upon that issue. The Taoiseach has indicated acceptance of the principle of consent in Northern Ireland on the constitutional guarantee, and the Deputy Prime Minister in Ireland, of course, has indicated the possibility of putting a referendum on articles 2 and 3 to the people in the Republic.

My hon. Friend is entirely right about the need for the security forces to have the complete support of the people and of the leaders in Northern Ireland. There must be within Northern Ireland people who have information about those who have taken part in terrorist activities over recent weeks. I would appeal to those people to come forward with that information. It requires an act of bravery to do so, but that bravery, if they do so today, may prevent more slaughter, mayhem, death and misery for other families at a later stage.

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): Is it not rather disappointing, to say the least, that the reaction of many Unionist politicians over the weekend to the constructive proposals that were put forward by the Irish Foreign Minister was to dismiss them as simply blarney? If agreement could be reached between the two Governments which accepts, of course, that the majority of the people in Northern Ireland have a right to stay in the Union but also makes other proposals leading to power-sharing in the North, would the Prime Minister carefully consider having a referendum in the United Kingdom as a whole? Although there might be a referendum in the Republic, the people of the United Kingdom could have an opportunity of deciding on those proposals prior to any parliamentary approval. Would not that be one way forward to overcome any veto by politicians in the North?

The Prime Minister: I am not at all sure that it would be helpful to making progress to comment on every aspect of what the hon. Gentleman says, although I understand what compels him to say it.

Perhaps I could make this point, which is relevant to the position in Northern Ireland: for too long the concerns of many people in Northern Ireland have been dominated by fears—some rational, some irrational—at each extreme of debate. What I think we have to do, if we are to work with the constitutional leaders in Northern Ireland to provide a settlement, is to try to offer the guarantees and certainties that will ensure that the extreme views that are so often put do not carry favour with the majority of people in Northern Ireland.

Once those fears and uncertainties are put to rest, I believe that we will have a much better climate in which we can work with all the constitutional leaders in Northern Ireland and try to promote a settlement that will end the bloodshed. Therefore, the way ahead that we proposed is the right one, although I note the hon. Gentleman's comments.

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): Has any estimate been made of the expenditure involved in the many bodies that were set up at the Council meeting? Although I agree very much indeed with what the Prime Minister said about economic policy, does he accept that the best that we can now do in the House of Commons is to wish him well, observing that the European union requires that the broad outlines and guidance of economic policy will now be determined by the Council by majority vote under article 103, which applies to us as well as to other member states?

The Prime Minister: As my hon. Friend will know, those are guidelines, and they were negotiated by my right hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont) and myself in the Maastricht negotiations some time ago. On the substantive matter of the European union, the European union gives rise to a good deal of misunderstanding among people. It simply consists of the so-called three pillars—the European Community plus the arrangements for intergovernmental co-operation—I emphasise the word "co-operation"—in foreign and home affairs. "Union" is a way of describing that three-pronged structure, and it is nothing more than that.

I cannot immediately give my hon. Friend, off the cuff, the costs of those new institutions. Many of the institutions were agreed in principle many years ago, and there has been a delay in establishing them until the matter of sites was concluded. My hon. Friend will agree, for example, to take but one illustration, that the advantage of establishing Europol, if it is successful in dealing with drugs and crime money, is expenditure that, for all the people of Europe, will be seen as well worth while.

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): Is the Prime Minister aware that there will be great disappointment that he has rejected the proposals which my hon. Friend the Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume) has been discussing? Given that Mandela was convicted of terrorism and has just won a Nobel prize, that Arafat was once refused permission to enter America and has now entered into meaningful discussions with the Israeli Government, and that David Owen is in Yugoslavia talking with men associated with violence, is it not time to look at the proposal put forward by the Irish Government 25 years ago, that the United Nations might send a mediator who would be able to talk to everybody in Ireland? The Prime Minister's refusal to have talks with everybody is now an obstacle to a peaceful settlement.

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman's implication is that he would talk to men engaged in violence. That is not a position that I or the leaders of any of the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland hold. It may be the right hon. Gentleman's view, but in a democracy such as the United Kingdom, that is not the way to proceed.

The right hon. Gentleman speaks almost for himself——

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): No.

The Prime Minister: Well, for himself and perhaps the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner)—not together a weighty crowd.

I respect and admire the efforts of the hon. Member for Foyle—I mean that; I am not saying it as a matter of form—but it is my view and that of the Irish Prime Minister that we cannot proceed with those proposals.

Sir Peter Hordern (Horsham): As to the European Commission's White Paper on growth and unemployment, will my right hon. Friend confirm that the Government's opinion is that economic growth cannot be obtained by increasing public spending, still less by raising taxes? Will he further confirm that the best way to achieve economic growth is to cut European bureaucracy and arrive at a successful conclusion of the Uruguay round? Will my right

[Sir Peter Hordern]

hon. Friend say what success Mr. Delors and the Commission are having with the French on the latter matter?

The Prime Minister: There was complete agreement at the Council that we need a satisfactory settlement of the Uruguay round by 15 December. There was no suggestion by any participating state that that was not a desirable goal. I hope that progress is being made in dealing with the particular difficulties of agriculture in France. There are difficulties in concluding the Uruguay round with other countries beyond the European Community.

My right hon. Friend's points about economic development are entirely mine, and I would not wish to add to them. He makes the point that it is supply side changes that will lead to further growth and more jobs in Europe, not an excess of centrally funded expenditure.

Dr. Joe Hendron (Belfast, West): I join all other hon. Members in condemning the massacre in Greysteel, and the UFF/UDA. I hope and pray that the young policeman shot by the Provisional IRA in Newry makes a speedy recovery.

Is the Prime Minister aware that, as long as murderers are stalking the streets of Northern Ireland, especially in west and north Belfast, people are living in terrible fear? It ill behoves anyone to criticise those who are trying to end murder. I do not wish to make political points about articles 2 and 3 or Select Committees; I am asking the House how we can end murder and slaughter on our streets. Of the 23 people murdered in the past eight days, 12 have come from the edge of west Belfast, the Shankhill road, or from the centre of my constituency, Kennedy way.

My friend and colleague the hon. Member for Foyle has made courageous efforts to try to end the violence and the existence of one of the killing machines. Bearing that in mind, will the Prime Minister use his close relationship with the Official Unionist party to persuade its Members of Parliament and colleagues in local government to speak directly to the UFF, the UDA and the Democratic Unionist party, to try to persuade them to end their terrible campaign of violence?

The Prime Minister: I have to say that I doubt whether the constitutional politicians of Northern Ireland have any authority over these murdering butchers. That is undoubtedly the case, whether those murdering butchers are members of the UFF or the IRA. We are dealing with people who are beyond the pale of civilised behaviour, and it does not lie within the remit of any hon. Member to be able to talk them out of their behaviour. I wish it were the case that hon. Members could, but events of recent years have shown that they cannot.

The hon. Gentleman may have implied that I was critical of his hon. Friend the Member for Foyle. As I said earlier, I am not, and I am happy to reiterate that. The fact that I have chosen, for the reasons that I have set out, to say that we cannot take his hon. Friend's proposals further in their present form does not imply a criticism of his hon. Friend's activities or his courage in recent years. I happily make that point plain again.

How are we to deal, asks the hon. Gentleman, with the fear that exists on the streets of west Belfast and elsewhere? The answer is to continue to give the fullest possible support to the security forces and the Royal Ulster Constabulary. Against the sombre background of the murders committed in the past few days, we should not lose sight of the many achievements of the security forces in recent months. This year, some 50 people have been charged with murder or attempted murder, 3,600 kg of explosives have been recovered—more than twice as much as in the comparable period in the previous year—and 164 firearms and 42 rockets and mortar launchers have also been recovered. Many attempted attacks have also been prevented. Three such attempts have been intercepted in the past three weeks, and six people have been charged as a result.

The security forces are always in the light of public criticism when events of the type that we have seen in recent days occur, but we should also recall their many successes, not all of which can be made public.

Sir Michael Grylls (Surrey, North-West): Does my right hon. Friend accept that most people in the country would recognise that he took exactly the right line at the European summit when he insisted on dealing with practical issues such as competitiveness rather than airy-fairy dreams for the next century? In that respect, would my right hon. Friend also agree that, since Britain and America have been far more successful in creating new jobs in recent years than continental Europe, he should continue to use his influence to press the other EC countries to lighten the burden on business—for example, by removing red tape, as he said earlier? That burden should be lifted particularly from small and medium-sized firms, because they will create the new jobs that we all want to see in Europe.

The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend is quite right. That is why we took the initiative to help small and medium-sized companies with extra resources from the European investment fund. It is a fact that, if the Community had been as successful in the past 14 years in creating jobs as other countries in the OECD have been, we might have 9 million fewer unemployed in the Community.

It is also the case that, in the past 20 years, the Community's relative share of world trade has reduced. Part of that reduction was entirely to be expected as countries in the Pacific basin in particular began to industrialise, but the loss in the share of world trade implies a significant lack of relative competitiveness. That is a problem that we need to address.

It is a striking statistic—one that I have used before, but it is worth repeating again—that, given the same growth in the past 20 years, the United States has created four jobs for every single job created throughout the European Community.

Mr. Dennis Canavan (Falkirk, West): Would the Prime Minister remind supporters of internment that its reintroduction would almost certainly be counter-productive, because the last time it was tried, it turned out to be an effective recruiting sergeant for the paramilitaries, and the violence went from bad to worse?

Does the Prime Minister agree that the best way in which to proceed in the quest for peace would be to invite all the interested parties to a constitutional conference and to make it absolutely clear, right at the outset, that, if a party or parties boycotted those talks, they would nevertheless proceed, with a view to finding a just and peaceful solution to end the appalling bloodshed?

The Prime Minister: I set out my views on internment a few moments ago, and I have nothing to add. There are many lessons to be learned from experiences on previous occasions. Simply to call a constitutional conference with great hopes built up for it and then to see it fail may not be the most practical way forward.

What is right, which is implicit in the hon. Gentleman's question, is that we should continue discussions to find the maximum amount of agreement that exists between the constitutional parties, and then focus on the areas of disagreement and see how we can eliminate them. That is the intention of the talks that are proceeding, whether one calls them an intergovernmental conference or a constitutional conference. What is sought from them is what the hon. Gentleman was seeking with his proposal.

Mr. Andrew Hunter (Baskingstoke): Continuing with the question of Northern Ireland, does my right hon. Friend agree that constitutional uncertainty has been and remains a breeding ground for terrorism in Northern Ireland? Does he further agree that Northern Ireland, de facto and de jure, is part of the United Kingdom because that is the democratically expressed wish of the people of Northern Ireland; and that, important though the search is for a political formula, it is equally important to assure the peole of Northern Ireland and of Great Britain who has experienced terrorist outrage that the security response is commensurate with the increased threat of terrorism?

The Prime Minister: We must certainly ensure that the security response is commensurate with the increase in terrorism, and we remain in close touch with the General Officer Commanding British forces and, of course, with the leaders of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. As chairman of the Back-Bench committee on Northern Ireland, my hon. Friend speaks with considerable authority of the difficulties that he sees in Northern Ireland. I confirm his observation that Northern Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom and that, under the constitutional guarantee, it will remain so until and unless a contrary view is taken by the people of Northern Ireland.

Mr. Jim Marshall (Leicester, South): May I bring the Prime Minister back to the question of Northern Ireland and hope that I get an answer from him today? In answer to one question, the Prime Minister said that he still favours a three-strand approach. Does he accept the position that was adopted by predecessor some time ago —that there can be no agreement on any especial strand until there is agreement on all three?

The Prime Minister: The answer to that question is yes.

Mr. Patrick Nicholls (Teignbridge): Would my right hon. Friend agree that, if the Government of the Republic of Ireland are as committed to war against the IRA as Her Majesty's Government, that offers an opportunity for the IRA and Sinn Fein to be proscribed in both countries, so that a proper military offensive can be conducted against them? Would not that mean that there would be no hiding place at all for them on the island of Ireland, and that, although it maybe a rather sombre assessment, it is likely to be more realistic than the courageous efforts by the hon. Member for Foyle, which would require us to sit at a bargaining table with terrorists?

The Prime Minister: We remain in close consultation with the security forces in the Republic of Ireland, and that will continue. It is improving all the time, and I expect it to continue to improve; I would not wish to go further than that on this occasion.

Ms Kate Hoey (Vauxhall): I welcome the Prime Minister's call for constitutional parties in Northern Ireland to get round the table as quickly as possible. Does he agree that there is a huge democratic deficit in how we govern Northern Ireland at present, and that, while it is part of the United Kingdom, we should surely treat it in the same way as we treat other parts of the United Kingdom? Some hon. Members greatly support the setting up of a Select Committee on Northern Ireland. Did he discuss that with the Taoiseach? Did he have any views and if he did, what was the Prime Minister's response to his views?

The Prime Minister: I agree with a great deal of what the hon. Lady has said. I did not discuss the setting up of a Select Committee of this House with the Head of Government of the Republic of Ireland. That is a matter for the House. I certainly did not discuss it. It is a matter to be considered by the Procedure Committee. I understand that the Committee is examining it, and in due course, we shall consider any report that it may produce.

The hon. Lady is entirely right about a democratic deficit in Northern Ireland; there is a democratic deficit. It is precisely because we strongly share her views on that that we wish to make progress in the talks so that we can devolve a proper system of local government—an enhancement of democracy for local politicians in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Peter Bottomley (Eltham): Does my right hon. Friend agree that the murderers need to be limited in their physical capability? It needs to be made clear to those on both sides that the violence and the killing will bring no advantage to them. It is important to go on working so that their supporters put pressure on them to reduce their capability. May I sum up by saying that each part of the community must protect the other just as much as it tries to protect itself? Is not that a welcome small silver lining in the ghastly cloud hanging over Northern Ireland?

The Prime Minister: It is. One of the horrific ironies of the murders in Greysteel the other day is that members of both the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities were murdered in the attack. My hon. Friend is entirely right about that.

On my hon. Friend's first point, I can give a categorical assurance that there is no way in which the continued murdering and killing by anyone, whether from the Protestant side or from the Catholic side, will affect the Government's policies and it will not gain anyone anything in terms of democratic advantage.

Mr. Skinner: Is not the Prime Minister aware that when he speaks to my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) about dealing with terrorists, the people outside Parliament understand only too well that the Government have dealt with terrorists over the decades? They are dealing now with the Chinese Government who were responsible for the massacre in Tiananmen square only a few years ago.

Will the Prime Minister understand that, if we are to follow the success of the Arafat-Rabin talks, we must have talks not in the Irish Republic or in Britain, but in a neutral

[Mr. Skinner]

country? The way to get things off the ground is not to deal with the Conservative Government, who are in league with the Ulster Unionists who deliver them votes in the House of Commons, or with those in the Irish Republic, but to start the process in a neutral country. Such a policy resulted in success in the middle east, and that is the only way in which success can be achieved now.

The Prime Minister: As ever, the hon. Gentleman is very lucid, and as almost ever, he is entirely wrong. If the implication of his remarks is that we should sit down and talk with Mr. Adams and the Provisional IRA, I can say only that that would turn my stomach and those of most hon. Members; we will not do it. If and when there is a total ending of violence, and if and when that ending of violence is established for a significant time, we shall talk to all the constitutional parties that have people elected in their names. I will not talk to people who murder indiscriminately.

Mr. David Faber (Westbury): In the course of his discussions on Bosnia, was my right hon. Friend able to bring to the attention of his European counterparts the remarks last week of the senior British officer in Bosnia, Brigadier Angus Ramsay, who described Croat soldiers as "scum"? Given the appalling atrocities that continue to be carried out by regular Croat army troops in Bosnia, was my right hon. Friend able to make any progress towards the long overdue sanctions against Croatia?

The Prime Minister: The question of further sanctions anywhere in the former Yugoslavia did not come up in the discussions. It did not come up in the discussions between the Heads of Government. To the best of my knowledge —unless I am corrected by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary—the question did not come up in the parallel discussions at Foreign Minister level.

Mr. John Home Robertson (East Lothian): Everyone in Britain and in the island of Ireland desperately wants progress towards peace and a settlement in Northern Ireland. Is the Prime Minister aware that people find it difficult to understand why someone holding the office of Prime Minister in Britain is nit-picking about the proposals by my hon. Friend the Member for Foyle, which he apparently has not even seen yet? Can the right hon. Gentleman give an assurance that he will not allow his dependence on Ulster Unionist votes in the House to obstruct progress?

The Prime Minister: I would have thought that, even by the standards of the hon. Gentleman, that was rather cheap. Let me remind him that the position that I took on the initiative of the hon. Member for Foyle was taken also by the Taoiseach, who is not a Member of the House and is not dependent on the votes of any Member of the House. As I said earlier, there are no special agreements or deals with any other parties in the House. That has been stated by me and by others. The hon. Gentleman may smirk like a juvenile, but he falls well below the level of events with that sort of remark.

Mr. Ian Taylor (Esher): Does my right hon. Friend agree that we do not need to be defensive about the creation of the European union as of today, because it underlines the fact that the progress in the Europe of tomorrow will be on an intergovernmental basis and not just on a better defined set of Community institutions?

Will my right hon. Friend put maximum emphasis also on the workings of the European Monetary Institute? Even if this country does not want to be part of a single currency, it is vital that we encourage the convergence criteria within the European Community so that we can benefit from the stability that will emerge. It is vital also that we underline the importance of the single market, because if that were ever questioned, through currency instability, jobs in this country would be at threat.

The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend is entirely right. Co-operation by consensus, by universal agreement across the Community, is a sensible way of progressing whenever it is appropriate. That is what happens under the three-pillared approach that was agreed in the Maastricht treaty. It is not a question of compulsion; it is a question of agreement. Where that agreement can be reached, we are stronger collectively and individually.

As far as the convergence criteria are concerned, they occasionally raise the hackles of some hon. Members, but the reality is that the convergence criteria are precisely the sort of sound economic policies that some of those who oppose them under the European label urge on me in other circumstances. The reality is that they are nothing more or nothing less than sound economic management.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. We must now move on.

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Next weekend but one, the country will stop in its business for about two minutes to pay tribute to those who have died in two world wars, and will try to ensure that we as a nation learn the lessons of that.

The past hour has demonstrated the concern that is felt across the House for the people of Northern Ireland—across party, religion and denomination. I seek your guidance so that we can reflect the anger and solidarity, not only of Members of the House but of our constituents, who feel with and for their brothers and sisters on the other side of the Irish sea, on how we might appropriately show that.

There have been 3,000 people killed as a result of what has gone on in Northern Ireland: 2,000 were civilians; the remaining 1,000 were either in the police or armed forces. I do not think that there is a precedent, but I wonder whether you would permit, either between now and the end of today, or this week, the House to be adjourned or suspended for a moment or two to mark the universal disapproval of terrorism and of terrorists, and to reflect the cross-party resolve in the House, to try to see that no effort is spared to ensure that peace comes to Ireland as soon as possible?

Madam Speaker: I fully understand the hon. Gentleman's motives in putting his suggestions to me, and I appreciate the way that he put them.

There is undoubtedly complete disapproval in all sections of the House of what has taken place in Northern Ireland recently. Expressions of profound sympathy with the sufferings of Northern Ireland, and of concern for its future too, have been heard from every quarter of the House in recent days. As we have heard following the

statement today, those expressions have been reconfirmed by every Member whom I have called and who represents the varying points of view of the parties in the House.

Let there be no doubt that I share those sentiments—as I am sure does every hon. Member—as Speaker of the House of Commons, although I do not speak on those matters. We have recorded the sentiments that we feel about the happenings in Northern Ireland in recent days. I think that one of the best tributes that we can pay to the families there and to the people who have suffered is that we let those sentiments be known, as we have done today, and go on with our proceedings. I hope that hon. Members will support me in that.

Rev. Ian Paisley: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the people of Northern Ireland, I thank you for those remarks. They will be helpful to us all.

Madam Speaker: I am very touched by that.

Orders of the Day

Railways Bill

Lords amendments considered.

Clause 4

GENERAL DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE REGULATOR

Lords amendment: No. 1, in page 4, line 46, at end insert—

("( ) The Secretary of State shall also be under a duty, in exercising the functions assigned or transferred to him under or by virtue of this Part, to promote the award of franchise agreements to companies in which qualifying railway employees have a substantial interest, "qualifying railway employees" meaning for this purpose persons who are or have been employed in an undertaking which provides or provided the services to which the franchise agreement in question relates at a time before those services begin to be provided under that franchise agreement.")

4.40 pm

The Minister for Public Transport (Mr. Roger Freeman): I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Madam Speaker: With this it will be convenient to take Lords amendments Nos. 2 and 3.

Mr. John Heppell (Nottingham, East): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I seek your guidance. During the passage of the Bill in Committee, 713 amendments and 32 new clauses were tabled. On report, we debated 252 amendments and 28 new clauses. We are now faced with another 470 Lords amendments and new clauses. Is there a parliamentary procedure to prevent the Government from tabling new amendments at this late stage and effectively changing their earlier promises?

Dr. John Marek (Wrexham): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. I am concerned about the matter. You must have seen the myriad amendments and new clauses that have been tabled. It makes me think that my service on the Standing Committee was a complete waste of time because we have a new Bill before us. Is there no way to send this botched job back to the Government draftsmen so that they can come up with something new that we can consider in detail, and in enough time? Effectively, we have a new Bill before us and only two days in which to consider it. It is a travesty of the rules of Parliament.

Madam Speaker: There is a great deal of responsibility on the Ministers whose task is to persuade the House to agree with the amendments. The ball is in their court.

Mr. Freeman: I hope that the House will find several of the groups of amendments that we shall be considering today and tomorrow relatively uncontroversial, although I recognise that some are controversial. My noble Friend the Minister for Aviation and Shipping gave detailed explanations of many of the amendments and I hope that the House will have had the chance, to the extent necessary and prudent, to study his remarks.

Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody (Crewe and Nantwich): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I seek your guidance. I do not believe what my ears are hearing. Is it customary for hon. Members to recommend that other hon. Members take as read speeches made in the other place? Is it not normal parliamentary procedure for Ministers to take responsibility for their own speeches, to move their own amendments and to do the House the elementary courtesy of at least trying to explain what they have in mind?

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Ministers must make their own judgments.

Mr. Freeman: I am just coming on to do that. I was trying, in a courteous manner, to refer to the proceedings in another place. I am only too delighted, as I had planned to do, to explain the purpose of the amendments.

Lords amendment No. 1 lays a duty on the Secretary of State in relation to part I. The hon. Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Mrs. Dunwoody), who participated in the Standing Committee, will remember that there were already provisions in the Bill, which we debated in Committee, dealing with the promotion of management-employee buy-out bids. The Bill was defective in not including such reference in part I. The amendment rectifies that. It does not introduce a new principle or policy. It makes the Bill clearer.

The amendment lays on the Secretary of State a duty clearly to promote the award of franchise to management-employee bids, and that is defined in the amendment. It refers to companies

"in which qualifying railway employees have a substantial interest, 'qualifying railway employees' meaning for this purpose persons who are or have been employed in an undertaking which provides or provided the services to which the franchise agreement in question relates at a time before those services began to be provided under that franchise agreement."

There is no clear definition—essentially, it will be a matter for the courts—of "a substantial interest". I shall not attempt to define that. The courts may wish to adjudicate upon the matter if a case comes before them.

The purpose of putting "a substantial interest" on the face of the Bill is to show that we wish to support British Rail management and employees who come together to take an interest—it does not have to be a 100 per cent. interest—in a company that bids for a franchise. Although the interest does not have to be 100 per cent., clearly, "a substantial interest" does not refer to a 5 per cent. interest. It is for the courts to determine, in the circumstances of a case, what is "substantial".

Mrs. Dunwoody: I am beginning to find this even more "Alice in Wonderland" than I had expected. Will the Minister accept that it is the responsibility of the House of Commons to frame legislation in such a way that it is clear and that House votes on it on the basis of its meaning? I have always had the rather old-fashioned view that Parliament is here to examine clear English, to understand what it means and to take decisions based on that. Will the Minister explain why he is seriously suggesting that the House should accept wording that is so unclear that he automatically expects it to be challenged in a court?

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Lady had time to table an appropriate amendment defining that in terms of 5, 10, 15 or 20 per cent.

Mrs. Dunwoody: I am not a Minister.

Mr. Freeman: The Government prefer this more general language. One has to decide, in the particular circumstances of the case, what "a substantial interest" means. In part, it will depend on the capitalisation of the company. It is not possible to legislate precisely in all circumstances. It depends in part on the debt burden. As those on the Opposition Front Bench will appreciate, in past bus privatisations, the amount of debt incurred by the management and employees varied considerably. The substantiaal debt burden incurred by some is still being repaid from the profits of the operation. It is not possible to be precise in every circumstance.

Mr. John Prescott (Kingston upon Hull, East): Is the Minister telling the House that if British Rail employees —managers or workers—want to combine in a joint bid with both private and public sectors, a judgment will have to be made about the size of the interest? Is he leaving the courts—rather than the House—to decide whether that will be 5, 10, 15, 20 or 50 per cent.? Taking into account the Government's other view—that British Rail will be allowed to make a bid for a franchise and could do so at a cheaper price than that being offered by the private sector—will that not encourage the private sector to get into bed with one or two employees so as to offer a cheaper price and make its bid seem like a British Rail bid?

Mr. Freeman: It might help if I explain that the Government have not reached any conclusions, or made any announcements, about any price reference to management-employee buy-out bids for franchises. The hon. Gentleman will recall that in Standing Committee I made it plain that our policy in relation to the outright sale of freight, whether train load or container business, was that it was appropriate for a small premium to be afforded to the management-employee bids, consistent with the preferences given in the sale of bus companies. That is normally expressed in terms of a discount.

Mr. Prescott: A cheaper price.

Mr. Freeman: Yes, but we are not applying that principle to the bidding for franchises. As I made clear in the Standing Committee, there is a distinction between franchises and bids for discrete businesses of British Rail which it will sell.

Mr. John McAllion (Dundee, East): If the Minister looks at the wording of the amendment, he will see that a duty is imposed on the Secretary of State to promote the award of franchises to bids which involve former employees of British Rail. If the Government are to promote in that way, that must mean that some competitive advantage will be given to such a bid.

If the Government are doing that, why is it necessary for franchise bids only to have "a substantial interest"? It will be possible for a bid with only a minority interest of former BR employees to be given a competitive advantage. The Minister is not addressing that point. Has not the Minister recommended to the private sector that a bid representing the interest of 20 or 25 per cent. of former employees of British Rail will have a competitive advantage over every other bid for franchises?

Mr. Freeman: We are not discussing the process for the bidding for franchises. The hon. Gentleman knows that that subject will be dealt with in the debate on a grouping

of amendments in due course. We are talking about a general duty that is placed on the Secretary of State to promote management and employee buy-outs——

Hon. Members: That is the point.

Mr. Peter Snape (West Bromwich, East): Perhaps I could help the Minister.

Mr. Freeman: I am well capable of helping myself, thank you very much.

Mr. Prescott: It does not seem so.

Mr. Freeman: Perhaps I could explain. I have dealt with the price preference, but there is another way in which management and employee bids can be assisted. That is in terms of the financial assistance which is to be provided by British Rail, and which is limited to a sum of £100,000 in each particular management and employee bidding group, in preparing for bidding for franchises. That is a clear example, and I am not talking about the price preference in the context of the 5 per cent. discount that has been applied in the past for bids for bus companies.

Mr. Snape: The Minister seems to be floundering—that is unusual for the hon. Gentleman—on the clear piece of legislation contained in the clause.

I wish to raise a point similar to that raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion). Surely at such an early stage of the proceedings it would be helpful to know what criteria—financial or otherwise—railway managers are expected to follow before they mortgage their homes. Is not this the right place and time to debate that subject?

Mr. Freeman: I hope that the hon. Gentleman will raise that matter during his speech, at which time I will seek to answer it.

I know that the hon. Gentleman has experience of the process because he has been associated with a distinguished management and employee bid in the bus industry. I congratulate West Midlands Travel and appreciate the supporting role that the hon. Gentleman has been playing since the company entered the private sector. I do not wish to score party political points here, but the company is owned by its management and employees. It is successful, and I am pleased that the former employees of the company own shares in it. The hon. Gentleman and I visited the company recently and I am glad to applaud the company, its management and its employees.

There is no question of the management and employees of British Rail having to enter into second, third or fourth mortgages to raise money to bid for franchises. That is wholly out of the question. We are talking about the management and staff of British Rail joining to bid for franchises, either by themselves or in conjunction with other private sector companies. Those companies might be financial institutions or operating companies.

We want that to happen, and there is real evidence of interest among the 25 potential franchise companies. I have spoken to a number of managers and I can confirm that senior management responsible for running train services within British Rail are interested in proceeding. We shall see how many of them offer bids when we come to the franchising process, but the Secretary of State will have a duty under the amendment to promote that interest. I have given a clear example of the way in which my right hon. Friend intends to do so.

Mr. John Gunnell (Morley and Leeds, South): The Minister referred to a management buy-out in the West midlands. He will be aware that I was involved in a similar buy-out in West Yorkshire.

There is a great difference between those buy-outs and what the Minister is dealing with in this case. In the cases of the bus companies, the buy-outs involved existing and functioning companies, the value of which could be ascertained; finance could then be put together on the basis of management who were motivated to move in that direction before it received any suggestions from outside. The buy-outs came from the innate motivation of the managers, who believed that that was way to ensure an integrated network in West Yorkshire.

The position is different if one has to encourage and prod people into undertaking management bids. Does the Minister agree that the motivation of managers and their drive to make a company successful will determine in part whether people will finance that company? I am concerned that——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The House is becoming concerned at the hon. Gentleman's lengthy intervention. He has made his point, and perhaps the Minister will now reply.

Mr. Freeman: It is a fundamental tenet of Conservative party policy that we wish to encourage the management and staff of any enterprise to take an equity interest in the running of that enterprise. That has worked well with the National Freight Corporation, with British Airways and with the bus industry. It is a fundamental tenet, and that is why we are putting it in the Bill.

It may be helpful if I briefly explain the financial structure of the franchises. I am not talking about a company that is bidding for a franchise with or without its management and employees having to bid sufficient sums to acquire or maintain the infrastructure. That is the responsibility of Railtrack.

I am not talking about the necessity to acquire rolling stock. We recognise that rolling stock—either second-hand or new—will have to be leased from the rolling stock leasing companies which we propose to establish. Franchising companies will need sufficient resources to meet the working capital requirement. In many cases, that will be a negative working capital requirement because of the prepayments of season tickets by commuters. There may be no need to raise capital simply for the working capital requirements of the business. It may be necessary to have lines of credit or financial resources which may have to be drawn upon if the business encounters either a fall in its revenues or an unforeseen increase in costs. Those are risks with which the private sector has experience of dealing. Therefore, although I do not anticipate that the management and employees will have to put up significant sums, they will be involved in the venture. They will need lines of credit or financial support from the City and elsewhere to bid for franchises.

Amendment No. 2 deals with the relationship between my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State—and future Secretaries of State—and the regulator. The amendment deals with a change in a provision in the original text of the Bill, where the regulator had to have regard to the financial position of Railtrack. The change which was proposed in

[Mr. Freeman]

the Lords and which we are commending to the House deals with the regulator acting in a manner which will not render it unduly difficult to finance any activities.

The amendment strengthens the position of Railtrack vis a vis the regulator in a perfectly sensible fashion. It allows Railtrack to prosper, and ultimately we wish to see Railtrack move into the private sector, although we cannot forecast when that will happen. We want Railtrack to be able to manage its affairs in a sensible fashion and in accordance with the financial regime that has been laid down by the Secretary of State while it is subject to the regulator.

The way in which the regulator controls the activities of Railtrack is essentially through the access agreements, with which the regulator has to agree. The Government think that the amendment is sensible and that it provides sufficient air for Railtrack to breathe to ensure that it succeeds and prospers.

Those are the reasons behind the two amendments which I have addressed. Amendment No. 3 does not represent a change in policy and is technical. I commend the amendments to the House.

Mr. Brian Wilson (Cunninghame, North): First, I must place on record our deep objection to the way in which the Bill has been handled right up to the eleventh hour. In two days we are supposed to deal with 109 pages and 470 Lords amendments. The Bill has been rewritten. Fundamental changes were made at the eleventh hour and fifty-ninth minute. Many of the assurances given by Ministers in Committee have been thrown overboard at the last moment in an effort to make the whole thing workable—a task in which Ministers have signally failed.

Seldom can a piece of legislation have been so thoroughly discredited before even reaching the statute book. Yesterday the final depths of farce were plumbed. We learned that the Department of Transport working party on restructuring British Rail had told Ministers that a £2 billion public service obligation grant will be required for next year. That is £1·15 billion more than for the current year, and it is just the first instalment in the cost of privatisation.

5 pm

At a time when everything worth while in our society is under threat and when the nation's economic plight is so dire that value added tax is to be added to the cost of domestic fuel, the Government are considering spending an extra £1·15 billion not on improving the railways but on financing the privatisation of the railways. As a result of that extra £1·15 billion, not one extra train will run, not one extra passenger will be carried and not one extra tonne of freight will be transferred from our roads. The phenomenal increase in the taxpayers' subsidy will not go towards developing our railways. It will go towards paying for the gargantuan additional costs inherent in rail fragmentation and privatisation.

The proposed level of grant referred to in the working party's document is far in excess of the grant that British Rail has ever been given. If British Rail were given an annual grant of £2 billion, no one would be talking about privatising the railways. We would be boasting, like our continental neighbours, about how good our state railway company is. But having cut the grant to British Rail by 23 per cent. in the current year, with all the resultant service cuts and fare increases, the Tories are preparing to increase the grant by 250 per cent. next year to put in place the structure for privatisation. That is not a transport policy. It is the politics of prejudice, which have characterised the whole shoddy operation.

We see the same approach in the first amendment before us today. The Minister in the Lords suggested that it was merely a technical amendment. The Minister here says that it does not change anything. But the amendment would not have been proposed if it did not change anything and was not intended to do so. It was specifically the first attempt at circumventing the Peyton-Marsh amendment. That amendment placed a duty on the franchise director to give preference to management buy-outs. As my hon. Friends have adduced, management buy-outs are a form of privatisation.

The record of many management buy-outs is different from the one cited by the Minister. The Medway Ports were a management buy-out. City Link was a management buy-out. But, of course, management buy-outs quickly become full privatisations. The Government merely say that preference will be given to private bids to take over parts of the railways.

I object strongly on behalf of the great majority of railway managers to the way in which their name has shamelessly been taken in vain by Ministers. Ministers have paraded the country telling everyone who would listen—many preferred not to—that the Government were doing everything for the railway managers, who were champing at the bit to become involved in management buy-outs. Under the regulations that the Government insisted on enforcing, those same railway managers are not allowed to answer back for themselves on pain of losing their employment with the railways. If one of them had stood up and said that railway managers were not keen to become involved in management buy-outs, he would have risked not only his career prospects but his job.

While railway managers have been constrained, Ministers have felt able to travel around the country falsely representing the views of the railway managers. Ministers took it to the ultimate extreme in dealing with their Back Benchers. They told Back Benchers that they could not allow British Rail to compete because railway managers wanted to compete. Last week we saw the first evidence of the truth of the matter in a survey of railway managers.

Under the protection of anonymity—which surely should not be required in a democratic society—81 per cent. of railway managers said that they were opposed to privatisation as outlined in the Railways Bill. When asked whether they were in favour of British Railways Board having the ability to bid for franchises, 68 per cent. said yes and 18 per cent. said no. When asked whether they were in favour of management buy-outs in preference to BR bidding, 20 per cent. said yes and 64 per cent. said no. When asked whether there was a conflict between management buy-outs and BR bids, 77 per cent. said yes and 6 per cent. said no.

So when, for the first time, the managers are asked, we find a majority of between three and four to one against everything that the Government are doing. Yet Ministers have shamelessly maintained outside this place the hypocrisy and untruth that the purpose of the legislation is to support the ambitions of railway managers.

Why do the Government always support minority vested interests? It would be astonishing if within the

whole railway network there were not a few managers who could be paraded in *The Daily Telegraph*—three, to be precise—and I believe that the same three were paraded last week at St. Ermine's hotel to tell Tory Back Benchers about the enthusiasm for management buy-outs among their colleagues. If railway managers were so in favour of management buy-outs, I should have thought that two different sets of three could have been found—one for St. Ermine's hotel and one for *The Daily Telegraph*. But not a bit of it—it was the same three.

I should be interested to know who paid those three railway managers while they sat in St. Ermine's hotel in a room booked by Coopers and Lybrand telling Tory Back Benchers what to do with their votes in the Division Lobby. Indeed, I am interested in the role of Coopers and Lybrand in rail privatisation as a whole. Why does Coopers and Lybrand book rooms at St. Ermine's hotel and fill them with railway managers, presumably in British Rail's time, in order to dragoon Tory Back Benchers into those rooms to be told what to do?

Coopers and Lybrand has a big role in all this. It has a big financial role. One of its directors, Sir Christopher Foster, is the Secretary of State's adviser on privatisation. While Coopers and Lybrand may be able to do some of the Government's dirty work a few yards away from here and book hotel rooms, it does not seem to be getting on so well with the substantive matters of railway privatisation. I do not know whether the Minister will tell me what Coopers and Lybrand is paid for its consultants' reports.

Coopers and Lybrand has come back twice to the Government to tell them that it cannot come up with access-charging regimes for the railways and that more work will have to be done. According to *Modern Railways* this month, Coopers and Lybrand has told the Government that the idea of railway leasing stock companies will not work. The Government can pay anyone to book a room in St. Ermine's hotel, but they are paying Coopers and Lybrand millions to tell them that the thing will not work and that the crucial solutions cannot be found. If the Minister can shed any light on the role of Coopers and Lybrand, Sir Christopher Foster and all the rest of the interlocking gang who are pushing privatisation through, the information will be received with interest and probably with surprise by the House.

Conservative Back Benchers can do what they like. I am sure that they will vote for all this nonsense. They will think that they have got themselves off the hook. The legislation was another own goal even before the historic compromise was reached: it had been discredited and the Government were a laughing stock because they were offering nothing. The amendment is part of that. Priority, preference and promotion will be given to private bids against any bids from British Rail. That is the easy bit. Legislating for that is easy. But management buy-outs or private companies with a token insert of management involvement will still have to raise the money.

We know—we do not need to have it explained in a little tutorial from the Minister—that companies will not take over the assets. We know that the Tory Government are setting up a raft of quangos to take over the assets. We know that the companies will take over management contracts for a limited period without any of the assets that provide security. We understand all that. But the companies will still have to raise the money in the markets to finance that operation.

I notice that the Secretary of State is sitting there dumb. I am reminded of something that I read yesterday when I was browsing through Lady Thatcher's memoirs—it is good for insomnia. I quote from page 835 under the heading, "Men in Lifeboats":

"But I still wanted a new face at Education where John MacGregor's limitations as a public spokesman were costing us dear in an area of great importance."

If he was a failure at education, he is a disaster at transport. *[Interruption.]* I am sorry. Lady Thatcher has high opinions——

Mr. Stephen Day (Cheadle): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Wilson: No. Obviously, the Secretary of State for Transport has a great track record on popular policies. I quote from page 848 of Lady Thatcher's memoirs:

"John MacGregor supported me: I could not now credibly promise a radical overhaul of the community charge, no matter how convenient it seemed."

He is back today and cannot promise an overhaul of rail privatisation, no matter how convenient or sensible it might seem, and no matter what a splendid precedent it might be.

Yesterday, he was confronted with questions. Suddenly, after so many months, we started to hear about 15-year franchises—such franchises entered the frame. It is policy on the hoof. The Government can provide 15-year, 30-year or 50-year franchises, and they can politically fix a subsidy to those franchises for a couple of years, but they will not be here to see them through. I make no idle boasts but there may or may not be a change of Government—that remains to be seen.

If anyone in the City puts money into the franchises on the assumption that this Government, for political reasons, can guarantee a level of subsidy and then guarantee the conditions of those franchises to those operations for more than 18 months or two years, much less three years, five years, 10 years or 15 years, they will be much mistaken. I would not put tuppence on it. I do not think that they will put much money on it because everyone realises that the Government will throw money at a small number of franchises to give them some political credibility this side of a general election. People will see through that because they will realise that, if it ever got beyond that stage, every bit of loading that went towards the few private franchisees would be at the expense of those operations that were still run by British Rail.

Labour Members speak for railway managers. We speak for the 80 per cent., not the 20 per cent. While 20 per cent. are being bribed into taking franchises with assurances that Ministers are in no position to give, 80 per cent. will still be running services in the public sector. We will not stand idly by and see them left with a rump railway stripped of investment and subsidy in order to skew financial support to those small elements that the Government have managed to get into the private sector.

"Preference" and "the promotion of management buy-outs" are double talk for saying that, in all the circumstances, British Rail will be discriminated against and anyone the Government can get to bid against British Rail will be preferred. That approach, which is inherent in this amendment, was confirmed by the deal done last week where it was formalised that if anyone bids, or anyone can be found to run a railway, British Rail will be disqualified from doing so.

[Mr. Wilson]

I need hardly say that that is not acceptable to the Labour party. I said last week, and I say again, that if people buy the fact that silly Government Members paraded their consciences in the summer about their concern for the future of the railways and the right of British Rail to bid, electors and anyone who knows anything about the industry will judge the consistency or the principle that underlies that decision. We will oppose amendments Nos. 1 and 2.

The whole question of Railtrack's charges becomes extremely interesting in the context of the document entitled "Commercial Returns for Passenger Train Operating Companies", which states:

"Roundly the central Government grant requirement would total some £2 billion in 1994-95 assuming an 8 per cent. return for Railtrack."

It is interesting to have confirmation that Ministers are working on a return of 8 per cent.

Mr. Freeman *indicated dissent.*

5.15 pm

Mr. Wilson: The Minister is welcome to intervene if he so wishes. The 8 per cent. return for Railtrack will come only through charges to the operating companies. That will be the source of income for Railtrack via the franchise director. As we all know, the subsidy to British Rail in the current year is about £830 million. Those are the two figures, like for like—£830 million and £2 billion. The hon. Member for Worcester (Mr. Luff) looks characteristically puzzled. I may be able to help him.

Mr. Peter Luff (Worcester): My puzzlement relates to what the hon. Gentleman's speech has to do with the amendments under consideration.

Mr. Wilson: The hon. Gentleman's puzzlement speaks volumes about his comprehension. If he does not understand——

Mr. Matthew Banks (Southport) *rose——*

Mr. Wilson: Tory Members should hang on a second —I will listen to one at a time. Public schoolboys are so impetuous.

If the hon. Member for Worcester cannot read the amendments and find that they relate to the charging regime of Railtrack and management buy-outs, perhaps he needs a course in literacy rather than rail privatisation.

Mr. Banks: If the hon. Gentleman spent more time doing his homework not simply on the railways but in every respect, he would know that neither my hon. Friend the Member for Worcester (Mr. Luff) nor I went to a public school. Throughout this debate, I hope that the hon. Gentleman will spend more time concentrating on the amendments and less time on the invective. I have always felt that he makes much better contributions, which are listened to with greater interest on both sides of the House, when he is less personal and concentrates on the matter in hand.

Mr. Wilson: I am so impersonal I have forgotten the hon. Gentleman's name.

We have come to the end of a long process. We had reasonable debates in Committee, and we won assurances there. However, we have seen those assurances overturned in the other place. We have come to the last lap in the parliamentary process and we are confronted with an additional 470 amendments. Railway pensioners have written to us to express their concerns, but those concerns have been ignored.

Frankly, I am much less concerned about abuse towards Government Members than I am about the abuse of Ministers towards the railway network, railway pensioners and so on. If Conservative Members expect a soft ride and a nice little game of cricket, they will not get it. This privatisation is not like other privatisations because the difficulties do not end here—they begin here. All around the country, we will continue to tell people what the Government have done to the railways. We will identify stage by stage the consequences of the legislation and we will hold to personal and electoral account those who voted for it in the full knowledge of precisely what they were doing to the railways.

Sir David Mitchell (Hampshire, North-West) *rose——*

Mr. Wilson: Does the hon. Gentleman wish to intervene?

Sir David Mitchell: I simply join my colleagues in expressing the hope that the hon. Gentleman might turn his attention to the amendments.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The amendments relate to the general duties of the Secretary of State and the regulator. There has been nothing out of order to date.

Mr. Wilson: If I were in trouble, I do not think that I would like the hon. Members for Worcester, for Southport (Mr. Banks) and for Hampshire, North-West (Sir D. Mitchell) as my cavalry. Many of my hon. Friends wish to participate in this key debate.

What we have here is a set-up. I wonder whether any Conservative Members took the trouble to fight to get a copy of the report. It is not a two-bit report from a junior civil servant; it is a report from a top working party—the good and the great of the Department of Transport putting their collective intellect into how this will work.

I can provide copies of this paper to any Conservative Member who wants to know what he is voting for. It roundly says that the Government grant requirement will total some £2 billion in 1994-95, assuming an 8 per cent. return for Railtrack. Everyone will pay everyone else 8 per cent., and so that the train operating companies can pay the leasing companies and Railtrack the economic costs plus 8 per cent., £2 billion will be needed next year to start the circle. That compares with £830 million this year.

I hope that I have demonstrated that I am happy to take interventions and will be pleased to answer questions. The hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) was a great rebel in this matter, and by now I would have expected the hon. Gentleman and the ex-Transport Minister, the hon. Member for Hampshire, North-West, to be leaping to their feet to explain why it is a better deal for the taxpayer to pay £2 billion to restructure for privatisation than to pay £830 million to keep the BR network going. If any Conservative Member can explain that, I shall be pleased to allow him to intervene.

There is silence, because they do not know and do not care. They do not care how much it costs, or about the £2 billion for restructuring or the £25 million currently being

paid to consultants such as Coopers and Lybrand and the usual suspects who are trying to tell the Government how to make the plan work.

They do not care that the extra £2 billion next year to British Rail will not provide an extra train. All that they care about is the ideology of breaking the system up and selling it. That is how it is seen in the country. No doubt we shall return to these arguments in the debate.

I ask my hon. Friends to oppose Lords amendments Nos. 1 and 2. I again express shock at the fact that we shall have to vote on 470 amendments. We are in for a long night.

Sir Michael Grylls (Surrey, North-West): I have not spoken on the Bill before. That confession is not especially relevant but my deeper confession is that I am filled with admiration for the Opposition. For 13 years companies have been privatised or commercialised, one after the other. Great monolithic nationalised industries which were pinned down by the Government and the Treasury were allowed to fly free and prosper and provide a better service for the public. After 13 years the Opposition are still bitterly opposed to that.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) gave me the impression that he was not greatly in favour of privatisation. I admire the fact that he can still say that because he has been proved wrong time and again. Today's issue of the *Evening Standard* has a front-page headline about British Telecom offering a better and better service to the public. I am using that as an analogy, and I hope that I am in order. British Telecom would never have offered such a service before it was privatised. It is offering it now because the monopoly has been broken, more competition has appeared, and BT has to offer a better service.

Many of my constituents daily use the railways, and it might be thought that I would have been nervous about privatisation because it might upset some of them. I have thought carefully about the Bill and about the railways, which I use. To put it mildly, the rail service is not that good, and almost anything would be an improvement. Our track record on freeing up monopolies and introducing competition over the past 13 years has been very successful.

I am prepared to stick out my neck and say that railway privatisation is good because it will introduce competition through franchises and because it will allow management buy-outs. The Opposition used to espouse a form of co-operative ownership, and that had some attractions. A management buy-out is at least half of that because it will free experienced people in the railways from the bureaucratic clutch of British Rail. They will be allowed to get money to run a railway and offer a franchise, and that must be good.

Mr. Keith Hill (Streatham): The hon. Gentleman speaks about the breaking of monopolies and the development of competition. Is he aware that the Government's proposals will lead to the establishment of regional and local private monopolies for periods of six, seven and possibly 15 years? Some of us prefer public and publicly accountable monopolies to private monopolies of the sort proposed by the Government.

Sir Michael Grylls: I understand the hon. Gentleman's point and I accept that he is partly right. However, there will probably not be different franchises on all sets of railway lines, so it would seem that there will not be competition. There may be competition on the north-east route to Scotland. Let us assume that the hon. Gentleman is right, and that only one franchisee will operate on that line. There will be competition between that line and an operator on another line. People may say about my hon. Friend the Member for Hampshire, North-West (Sir D. Mitchell), "His constituents have a fantastic line with a wonderful operator and we should try to encourage that operator to another line." Therefore, there will be competition by example.

Sir David Mitchell: Surely because of the private car and the considerable expansion of coach operators, especially on commuter routes, it is no longer true to say that railways have a monopoly. On the longer routes there is competition from the airlines. The hon. Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill), who raised this hare, is wrong.

Sir Michael Grylls: I was giving the hon. Gentleman the benefit of the doubt and trying to be as kind as possible while not deviating from the amendment.

Sir Paul Beresford (Croydon, Central): I shall be a little more vicious than my hon. Friend. Does he agree that the hon. Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill) is diametrically wrong? The whole point about franchising and contracting out is that they will give the client, British Rail, control of public accountability on behalf of the taxpayer. Currently there is no such accountability.

Sir Michael Grylls: My hon. Friend puts the point rather more firmly than I would have done. I rest on the truth of the interventions by both my hon. Friends who spoke with great clarity.

No hon. Member can escape the fact that competition, however it is done and however imperfect—and it is difficult to get perfect competition—is beneficial. We should aim for maximum competition, and I thank the Government for breaking the monopoly because it has always been illegal for anyone other than British Rail to operate a railway system. That is a big step. *[Interruption.]*

The Opposition should listen. Hon. Members are here for only one reason—to try to serve the public. We are not here for our own gratification. At the moment, the railway is a public service and we should try to ensure that it provides a better service.

I end where I started. The Opposition have experienced successful privatisation and commercialisation over the past 13 years, and they are still saying, "Oh no, it does not work." They are either blind or determined not to work for the good of their constituents or the wider public. We should encourage the Government to press ahead with franchising as quickly as possible in the interests of our constituents. Management buy-outs should be encouraged, and I am glad to see that referred to in the amendment.

Mr. Wilson: The hon. Gentleman is obviously a great expert on privatisation. Can he tell us of any other privatisation in which the industry concerned continues to depend for its profitability on the level of taxpayers' subsidy?

Sir Michael Grylls: The hon. Gentleman has asked a perfectly fair question and I shall answer it. We are aware that many of the railway routes will require continuing subsidies. The Government have not been doctrinaire and said that the subsidies will be wiped out overnight. It is in

[Sir Michael Grylls]

the interests of the public that they continue. If the hon. Gentleman is saying that the rail network is a more difficult commercialisation—perhaps a better term than privatisation when applied to the railways—I agree with him. However, that does not mean that we should run away from it and that we should not be more flexible in the way that we handle it.

5.30 pm

The hon. Gentleman cannot deny that the railways will be better served by competition, by the breaking of the monopoly and by the provision of a service with a private enterprise ethos. The industry needs to get away from the dread hand of a huge, bureaucratic business, which can never ben changed from within. The culture is too deep to change it from within; it can only be changed from without. I remember Sir Ian MacGregor saying when he was at British Coal, that every decision made either by him or by those at levels below him was immediately reported to the then Department of Energy. A business cannot be run properly with continual interference from Government.

British Rail needs to be freed from the dread hand of Government and commercialisation and management buy-outs must be encouraged. The Government are to be congratulated and I wish them well with the amendments.

Mr. Nick Harvey (North Devon): It is small wonder that, at this last stage in the progress of the Bill, we are considering measures to featherbed management and employee buy-outs. It is not that many months since the Secretary of State told us that he was holding back the floodgates of private sector interest until 1994. Now, with just two months until it is 1994, the floodgates are in danger of collapsing inwards for the lack of any water on the other side. The truth is that virtually no one is showing any interest in bidding. The whole madcap plan for privatisation is now dependent upon management and employee buy-outs. As the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) said, a recent survey shows that, even among those groups, there is precious little interest in bidding.

The Government are flogging a dead horse and this is their last chance to salvage anything from the project. Is it any surprise that management and employees are showing such a lack of interest? What is in it for them? They are being offered only short franchises and there are no assets against which to raise funds. There is no opportunity to build up any assets that they can sell on at the end of the franchise period. For them, it will just be a daily struggle to run the services.

Why should managers and employees want to carry the can when disasters, such as that at Clapham, happen? Why should they take on that burden of responsibility without any proper corporation behind them? They know the horrible truth about the running of the nation's railway services and trying to encourage them to take responsibility for that is, as has been said, like trying to sell ice to an eskimo. It is no wonder that they need the incentive of extra funds and a clear path in the bidding process, with British Rail being kept out of it.

In Committee, we discussed in some detail the principle that the teams running the shadow franchises should not then bid to take over those franchises. At that point in the saga, the Minister agreed with that. If the teams running the shadow franchises then bid for them, in effect they will be determining the price that they will have to pay for those franchises, or the subsidy that they will receive to run them. I recall that there was bad feeling during the bus privatisation because teams of managers valued the bus services that they then proceeded to buy.

In considering the special measures proposed to help management and employee buy-outs, we must question what impact competition law will have. I cannot help but remember the whole sorry debacle of the British Aerospace takeover of Rover, when the European Commission found that there had been unacceptable sweeteners. There is a risk that the Commission will reach the same conclusion about these measures.

Only this weekend we heard how much more privatisation will cost than was originally suggested. The late Robert Adley, the predecessor to my hon. Friend the Member for Christchurch (Mrs. Maddock), coined the expression "poll tax on wheels" to describe the Bill. At the time, he was referring to its unpopularity, but it might have been a more apt comparison had he been referring to the horrible expense that the taxpayer will have to bear. Privatisation will end up costing at least what was suggested at the weekend and probably a great deal more.

The preparations within British Rail for the shadow franchises and the management buy-outs are already having a desperate effect on morale as people within the industry wonder whether they are part of the in crowd—part of any bid. The air of intrigue and suspicion is having a profound effect on the morale of railway workers and that will become worse as time goes on.

Sir Michael Grylls: If the hon. Gentleman is so opposed to the Bill, why has the Liberal Democrat-controlled county council on the Isle of Wight welcomed the opportunity for the private sector to bid for the Isle of Wight railway? Why does the hon. Gentleman take a different line?

Mr. Harvey: I have said nothing today, or previously, to suggest that there should not be any private sector bid for any railway service. The amendments that we are discussing relate to management and employee buy-outs, which the Government want to featherbed. They want to distort competition and to short-change the taxpayer. Taxpayers have been investing heavily in our railway network for many decades. When someone wants to take over the service—whether a management buy-out or a private sector business—the least that the taxpayers are entitled to is the satisfaction and certainty of knowing that the service will be better run and at a better price than under British Rail, the existing carrier. There is no reason why there should not be management and employee buy-outs; I am not suggesting that they should be prohibited. However, such bids should be able to stand on their own feet in their attempt to beat British Rail.

The truth is that, in the dying hours of the passage of this Bill, the Government have been driven to make policy off the cuff. That is behind the Secretary of State's reluctant admission at the weekend that franchises might be allowed to run for as long as 15 years. For many months, anyone considering taking on a franchise has told him that, because any investment in the railways takes so long to be repaid, potential bidders would be interested only if the

franchises ran for longer than originally proposed. Now, in their desperation to make some sense of the privatisation, the Government have had to agree to that.

The Government are absolutely determined to wipe British Rail off the map. The amendments are an attempt to load the dice in favour of any bidder trying to take services away from British Rail. By all means management and employee buy-outs should be allowed to bid, but they should stand on their own feet, win on price and win on service provision.

Mr. Keith Hill: Lords amendment No. 2, according to the Minister, will enable Railtrack to manage its affairs sensibly. It also modifies the powers of the regulator in his application of access agreements.

Splitting the railway network between operating companies and an infrastructure authority—Railtrack—is a fundamental aspect of the Government's proposals. The scheme was greeted with bewilderment by the international experts who appeared before the Transport Select Committee, and the Committee expressed great scepticism about it on operational grounds. It remains a matter of deep confusion, however, why the Government have resolutely refused to name Railtrack on the face of the Bill, or to describe its functions therein.

Why have the Government refused to include any reference to Railtrack? Why have they broken with all precedent in privatisation legislation and refused to name a successor organisation of such fundamental significance? Why did they take their resistance to naming Railtrack to the extent of voting down an amendment so to do in the House of Lords? Does not that confirm that enormous powers for the future organisation of the railway will be concentrated in the hands of the Secretary of State. In the words of the Select Committee report, it is

"an indication of the sweeping powers contained in part II which enables the Secretary of State to restructure British Rail in the way he sees fit."

Will the Minister confirm, because Parliament, the public and potential operators have the right to know, that the absence of Railtrack from the Bill means that it will be possible for the regulator to approve franchises which combine control of both operations and infrastructure? Is that not the very definition of a network licence, which appears in amendment No. 2?

In other words, will the Minister confirm that it will be perfectly possible for, for example, Mr. Richard Branson, of a potential Virgin Rail, to enjoy sole ownership of the east coast main line—if he so wills and if he can afford it—for a period of several years in the not-too-distant future? Was not that the effect of amendment No. 163, passed in Standing Committee B in the House of Commons on 23 February 1993?

5.45 pm

The Minister owes it to the House to be frank about the matter, because it bears profoundly on the kind of railway service that the public are likely to experience in the future. It also bears profoundly on the future viability of Railtrack itself.

Are there not several other major question marks over the financial arrangements of Railtrack? One major question is about access charges. Will the Minister confirm that, with only five months to go before Railtrack assumes its responsibilities, there is still no agreement on a financial regime—in other words, that there is still no agreement about the rate of return that Railtrack is required to make on its assets and that, as a consequence, there is still no agreement on the charges that it will want to impose on British Rail or on possible private operators?

Is it not an extraordinary state of affairs, when literally half the railway, less than half a year before it comes into operation, still does not know what its revenue costs or revenue charges will be? Does not that uncertainty compound the uncertainty about the investment that is likely to be available to Railtrack following the current Public Expenditure Survey Committee round?

The Minister was right when, in Committee, he deplored the tendency of Governments to treat railway infrastructure as an economic regulator. He said:

"It is sometimes seen as the regulator. When public sector revenues are under pressure, investment projects are often postponed."—[*Official Report*, 11 February 1993; c. 52.]

Quite right too.

In contrast to that deplorable record, the Minister drew, at that time, a rosy picture of a long-term rolling programme of investment for railway infrastructure under the new Railtrack arrangements. It would help the House if the Minister could give us a guarantee that, following the Budget, there will be no cuts in investment for Railtrack. At the end of the day, it is not phoney deals or fancy franchises, but cash entering the system, upon which the future of the railway system depends.

Mr. McAllion: The hon. Member for Surrey, North-West (Sir M. Grylls) referred to Opposition Members repeatedly getting things wrong. The hon. Member for Christchurch (Mrs. Maddock) reminded him of the words of her predecessor, Mr. Robert Adley, that the proposals contained in the Bill were

"the poll tax on wheels."

If ever a Government got anything wrong, it was the Conservative Government when they brought in the poll tax; and if ever a Government are going to get it wrong again, it is the Government when they force this measure through the House tonight and bring upon themselves the hatred and rejection of the British people, who do not support the measures in the Bill and especially do not support the break-up of the public service railway.

I listened to the Minister of Transport in Committee, and I was not over-impressed by his contribution. I thought that perhaps he would have improved, having been given the summer recess during which to recover, but he made a brief speech tonight in introducing the amendments which even he should be embarrassed about.

The Minister began by saying that amendments Nos. 1 and 2 were relatively uncontroversial, and then he ran right into a wall of controversy when he suggested that he should not make the arguments for them because we could read them in the *Hansard* report of the House of Lords. As my hon. Friend the Member for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape) pointed out, that is no way for a Minister of the Crown to operate in the House of Commons. If he can argue the case for those amendments, as he does here, he should not refer hon. Members elsewhere.

The Minister went on to say that the amendments were to make things clearer, but he could not say clearly what "a substantial interest" meant. He could only say that it is not 5 per cent. We are all agreed about that. "A substantial interest" does not mean 5 per cent., but what does it mean? The Minister could not define it more specifically.

An annexe in a letter that the Minister circulated to my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) describes the different groups of amendments.

[Mr. McAllion]

When describing amendments Nos. 1 and 2 the Minister says that employees providing the railway services to be franchised must have "a significant interest". Which is the correct phrase? Is it the "substantial interest" that is in the annexe which the Minister sent to my hon. Friend? Will the Minister tell us which phrase will appear on the statute book when the Bill finally becomes a statute?

There is a difference between "substantial" and "significant". "Substantial" suggests that perhaps we are describing a majority interest. The Minister was careful not to define it in those terms, but that is what I would take to be the meaning of "a substantial interest". What do other hon. Members believe the phrase "a substantial interest" means? One may receive 650 different interpretations of what "a substantial interest" might mean.

Let us remember that we are dealing with law that will go on to the statute book. We could not get a definition of a key term in an important amendment that will go into a Bill and, by my standards, that is no way for a Minister to try to get any legislation through the House. In fact, he went on to say that he could not define "a substantial interest" because it depends on the capitalisation; it depends on the debt burden; it depends on the possibility that the company that is set up will suffer a loss of revenue at some time in the future.

It also depends on the unforeseen rise in costs. One foreseen rise in costs that may be able to be taken into account are the track charges that will be levied by Railtrack, but, as my hon. Friend the Member for West Bromwich, East pointed out, neither the Government nor the Minister are prepared to tell anyone what those track charges may be, so we do not know what foreseen or unforeseen costs may arise.

That is an insane way for the House to behave when we are dealing with legislation. What happens when one of the franchises is awarded to a bid that comes from a management buy-out and someone contests that award on grounds of interpretation? Should one go to the regulator and ask him to define "a substantial interest", or should one go to the courts?

Let us suppose that the parties ask the courts to decide what Parliament meant by "a substantial interest". The courts would look at the *Hansard* record of the debate and would find out that no one in Parliament could define "a substantial interest". The Minister was not prepared to do so. He virtually told hon. Members that it is up to us to make up our own minds about what that phrase means before we vote on the amendment. What will the courts think of the House if that is the sad result of our debate, because the Minister and the Government do not know what they are doing in these amendments?

The phrase "a substantial interest" is not the only problem. We went on to ask the Minister what he meant by "promoting". We are placing a duty on the regulator and the Secretary of State to "promote" management buy-outs. The Minister says that that does not mean price preference, so we are clear about that. Funds will be made available to help in the preparation of management bids. I think that the Minister said that—he referred to the fact that £100,000 of taxpayers' money would be made available for potential management buy-outs.

If I were a private sector bidder considering a franchise, I would make sure that former British Rail employees made up the required 6 per cent. Under the Minister's definition that is all that will be necessary to qualify for a £100,000 handout to prepare the franchise bid. That percentage interest will also place a duty on the Secretary of State and the regulator to promote the bid when compared with one with which no former British Rail employees are involved.

The whole thing is absolute nonsense. What will happen if there are two bids which in all other respects are equal, but one is a management buy-out? Will the Secretary of State and the regulator be obliged to give the management buy-out preference? What if a private sector bid is only marginally better than a management buy-out? Does "promoting" mean that the Secretary of State must still give preference to the management buy-out in those circumstances?

It is an insult for the Minister to come to the House in 1993 with those arguments and to expect the amendment to be carried with a majority. It is also an insult to those Conservative Members who have been getting kudos from their constituents throughout the summer by arguing that they will stand up to the privatisation of the railways. When the time has come, they are not taking part in the debate or complaining when the Minister tables such shoddy and slipshod amendments.

As a Scottish Member, I have a special interest in the debate, because ScotRail and the east coast main line will be two of the first franchises put out to tender. I am especially concerned because, at a time when the Scottish rail network is crying out for investment, the Government seem to have got their priorities completely wrong.

A recent report on transport links with Europe prepared for the Select Committee on Scottish Affairs identified an urgent need for a £750 million investment in track and rolling stock in Scotland. At such a time, it is wrong for the Government to proceed with a Bill that will promote management buy-outs and privatisation, change the structure of the railways, and put at risk safety and all the other things that are important to people in Scotland.

Time and again, hon. Members have referred to the stories at the weekend about the measure costing about £2 billion. We know that the original estimate for the public sector obligation grant for next year was £851 million, based on the assumption that the rail network would remain in the public sector. However, an influential interdepartmental Committee set up by the Minister and the Secretary of State is suggesting that, if privatisation goes ahead, the cost will be £2 billion.

Every hon. Member knows that there is an unprecedented squeeze on public expenditure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has made it clear that his proposed limits for public spending next year will not, under any circumstances, be breached. We must believe the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he says that £851 million will be spent on the public sector obligation grant next year. We must believe that that figure will not be breached, but if so, where will the other £1 billion-plus come from? I suggest that it will not come from Government grants to any franchise holder next year. The people who win the franchises will be expected to make savings by cutting services, jobs and working conditions for railway staff. That is not merely my view but that of the people who work in the industry.

Only last week, representatives of the "Save Our Railways" campaign came here. A train started in Glasgow, went to Edinburgh and then down the east coast

main line, picking up protesters. They all said exactly the same. People in Scotland have complained about the collapse of morale in ScotRail, caused by the threat of privatisation and management buy-outs. The Government dismissed that complaint. Mr. Donnie Shannon, a chargehand at Queen Street station in Glasgow, said:

"Privatisation isn't an answer. The railways require investment. Privatisation will threaten rural services and staff are particularly worried about their conditions under private ownership."

The protesters are not the only people to think like that. Tayside regional council is the transport authority for my constituency in Dundee and it has a strategy to try to persuade commuters to move from private to public transport. A key component is to encourage the use of our railways. A series of stations just outside Dundee—Broughty Ferry, Monifeith, Carnoustie and Arbroath—desperately need investment to upgrade the buildings, improve rolling stock and keep the fares down so that the service can compete with the cost of taking a private car into Dundee.

There is no hope of fulfilling that aim if the Secretary of State and the Government go ahead with their privatisation plans. There will not be sufficient investment, because the money will be directed elsewhere, to ensure the profitability of the franchises, whether they are management sector buy-outs or private sector bidders.

The same is true of the east coast main line. I said in Committee time and again that that line consists of two complementary services—an electrified core service, which runs between London and Edinburgh, and a non-electric, non-core service from London to Dundee, Aberdeen and Inverness. I am worried about what will happen to the non-core services if the line is taken over by the private sector.

I wrote to InterCity to explain my fears. Mr. Brian Burdsall, the director of the east coast main line, wrote back and assured me that, as long as InterCity remained in the public sector, it intended to maintain the present level of services to Aberdeen and Inverness, and that it regarded the non-core services as an integral part of the line. He went on:

"Whether private sector bidders will comply with this particular train plan and whether this timetable will endure for the length of the Franchise it is impossible to say at this point in time. This will partly depend on profitability and the level of Track Access charges which the Government has not yet determined."

While the line remains in the public sector and has Government support, services to Dundee and Aberdeen can be guaranteed, but once it is taken over by the private sector—whoever wins the franchise—there will be no guarantee. If the service cannot be run at a profit, it will not be run at all. It is as simple as that.

Mr. John Home Robertson (East Lothain): Where is the hon. Member for Aberdeen, South (Mr. Robertson)?

Mr. McAllion: Where are the Conservative Members who represent Scotland? I see that the Under-Secretary of State for Scotland has slipped into the Chamber. It is nice to see that at least one Scottish Tory Member has taken an interest in the debate, even if he has to because he is the Minister with that responsibility.

Recently, Mr. Douglas Smart, the secretary of the Railway Development Society in Scotland, wrote to Scottish Members to tell them of his concerns about the implications of rail privatisation in Scotland. He received a reply from the hon. and learned Member for Perth and Kinross (Sir N. Fairbairn), who said:

"I regard the complications of privatisation of British Rail as insurmountable and I am inclined to vote against the matter or abstain."

I do not know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman had hoped that that answer would be kept anonymous—he is not in favour of allowing anonymity for certain other people in society.

However, the letter was published, and at least that hon. and learned Gentleman replied to Mr. Smart, whereas other Tory Members representing Scottish constituencies did not—and we do not know their intentions tonight.

If privatisation goes ahead and lines are taken out of the public sector to be run by management buy-out teams or whoever, only one factor will determine their survival—whether or not those lines can be run at a profit. There will be no consideration of service to the people of the east coast of Scotland. In those circumstances, I know how I shall vote on the amendments and on the Bill tonight. I shall vote against them. The people of Scotland will be watching to see how Government Members who represent Scottish constituences vote.

6 pm

Mr. Home Robertson: I am happy to follow my hon. Friend the Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion), because I also represent an east Scotland constituency that depends on services provided by ScotRail and the east coast main line.

I was amazed by the speech of the hon. Member for Surrey, North-West (Sir M. Grylls), who presented the view of a true believer in rail privatisation. He said, rightly, that we should be predominantly concerned about the interests of our constituents, particularly those who rely on railway services. I hope that the hon. Gentleman's constituents will follow what happens to railway services in their part of the world. I fear greatly for the prospects of rail services in my part of Scotland. There is little doubt that the Bill will lead to poorer services and higher fares across the board.

Lords amendment No. 1 states that the Secretary of State shall have a duty to

"promote the award of franchise agreements to companies in which qualifying railway employees have a substantial interest".

Those who study the Register of Members' Interests will know that I am sponsored by the Transport Salaried Staffs Association. Its members, who are British Rail managers, must be the kind of people to whom the Minister was referring when he expressed the hope that there would be massive participation in management buyout by rail staff.

I am grateful to the TSSA for informing me of the views expressed by those of its members who are senior British rail managers in the survey to which my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) referred. Ninety-two per cent. of senior managers replying were not in favour of rail privatisation as outlined in the Bill; 77 per cent. were in favour of British Rail retaining the ability to bid for franchises; 71 per cent. were not in favour of management buy-outs; and 85 per cent. felt that there was a conflict between management buy-outs and British Rail bids—and I believe that the majority of people want British Rail to bid for franchises.

[Mr. Home Robertson]

British Rail's senior managers want no part of privatisation. They are more concerned about the future of the service.

Mr. Gary Waller (Keighley): Does not the hon. Gentleman think that it is significant that one of British Rail's most senior managers, Chris Green, managing director of InterCity, is prepared to put his career at stake by moving to ScotRail? That displays a very different attitude among managers than that claimed by the hon. Gentleman. Mr. Green said:

"The biggest difference in the end will be that we're going to have to be more inventive, attracting more customers through marketing initiatives against a backdrop of Treasury squeezes over the years."

At least Mr. Green recognises that, in the past, it was not Government handouts that were the key factor, but the dead hand of the Government and the Treasury, which prevented the railways—particularly in Scotland—from attracting more customers. He acknowledges that there is a different way of approaching the problem in future, and is prepared to move to Scotland to prove it.

Mr. Home Robertson: Chris Green moved to InterCity from ScotRail in the first place, and I am not surprised that he is baling out of InterCity when the Government are in the process of dismantling it.

The hon. Member for Surrey, North-West conjured up the wonderful spectacle of competition leading to processions of private operators laying on more and more services for the benefit of our constituents, but he gave it all away when, replying to an intervention by one of my hon. Friends, he acknowledged that all services would depend on subsidies for ever more. They will be big subsidies, as we know from leaks over the weekend.

The House may be interested to hear some of the responses by British Rail senior managers in the TSSA survey. Sadly, they must remain anonymous. One commented:

"Rail privatisation is essentially unsafe, requiring people unskilled in railway businesses to have access to systems and equipment for which they have inadequate training."

Another said:

"Political dogma is blind to practical reality."

One manager stated:

"I totally oppose BR privatisation in any form and I, like most other BR managers, believe it will fail to provide any kind of service."

There were many more comments, but perhaps the most significant of the comments that were passed to me was:

"Every success in your fight. We have been muzzled."

That is what the Government have done to the people who know about managing rail services. Right hon. and hon. Members are not supposed to be muzzled but are meant to protect the interests of their constituents—both those who work in the railway system and those who depend on rail services. Where are all those right hon. and hon. Members? Where is the hon. and learned Member for Perth and Kinross?

Mr. Matthew Banks: The hon. Gentleman quoted on the subject of safety someone whose identity and place of work is unknown to me. Does he accept that, throughout the whole process, the Government accepted each and every recommendation of the Health and Safety Executive?

Mr. Home Robertson: I am not persuaded that privatisation will ensure the retention of proper safety standards, and I do not believe any of the Government's assurances.

Mr. Hugh Bayley (York): My hon. Friend knows that Opposition Members tabled an amendment in Committee that sought to write into the Bill guarantees on each of the Health and Safety Executive's 37 recommendations to the Government. Is he aware that the Minister urged Conservative Members to defeat that amendment, so that it would not form part of the Bill?

Mr. Home Robertson: Nothing surprises me about the Government's cynical approach to this type of legislation. We know from bitter experience that they are prepared to sacrifice all manner of important principles in their drive for privatisation for the hell of it—and we see that today.

The presence in the Chamber of so few Government Members speaks volumes. I suspect that the vast majority of Conservative Members are thoroughly embarrassed by the Bill. Many of them led their constituents to believe that they would oppose the Bill. Where are those right hon. and hon. Members now? I hark back to the poll tax. Conservative Members failed to stop that lousy legislation reaching the statute book, and they ended up with a botched job that did them great damage. There is a serious danger that the same will happen again with the Bill.

The country is looking to Parliament to protect the interests of our constituents. It is our duty to do that, but I fear that the Tory majority in the House will let down the people of Britain again.

Mr. Snape: Listening to the Minister was like getting into a lift—or into an elevator, if one prefers the American name—that has muzak playing in the background. For the first three or four floors, it is relatively pleasant but as the lift continues to ascend, one realises that the guts of the music has been taken out and one is left listening to plink plonk. By the time that the lift gets anywhere near the top floor, one wants to rip out the speaker and jump on it. Putting violence aside in respect of the Minister, listening to him felt much the same. His voice was mellifluous enough but his speech was sadly lacking any any content. I do not believe that the Minister, in his heart of hearts, has any more faith in the Bill than any other right hon. or hon. Member. Indeed, although the few Conservative Back Benchers who are present profess to be in favour of it, I suspect that, in their heart of hearts, they do not believe in it either.

I listened with interest to the contribution of the hon. Member for Surrey, North-West (Sir M. Grylls). He said that he had not spoken on this subject for 14 years. One forbore to say that, by the time he sat down, one could well understand why; but his speech did not—let us say—hit the heights in comparison with other speeches that we have heard in this Chamber.

Anyone who believes that fragmenting the railway system in the way proposed by the Government—in particular, in two of the three amendments that we are discussing—will be good for safety and cohesion in the industry betrays his or her ignorance. It is a pity that the hon. Member for Surrey, North-West left the Chamber after making his speech. We need go back only 70 years or so—a comparatively short time in railway history—to see what happened to the system when small private operators competed with each other: gradually, they all went under

financially, and in 1923 the railways were combined into groups of larger, still privately owned, geographicall based regional companies.

I have no wish to cause Conservative Members further distress; I fear that, in due course, the electroate will do that anyway. However, let us consider what happened to those large, geographically based, privately owned companies throughout the 1930s and the second world war, until nationalisation. It is clear that they were exceedingly unprofitable. Let me choose one at random: the London and North-Eastern railway paid no dividends to its shareholders between 1935 and 1940. After that, of course, the taxpayer took care of the outgoings because of the second world war.

The fragmentation of the industry that the Government propose—whether or not management buy-outs are involved—is likely to prove disastrous on safety grounds as well, as has already been mentioned. It is difficult to find any senior BR managers who are in favour of the proposals, whether or not they can be persuaded to lead management buy-outs.

Predictably, the hon. Member for Keighley (Mr. Waller) referred to an article in this morning's *Daily Telegraph*, in which Chris Green was presented as a leading supporter of the principle. Although I cannot speak for him, I would not have thought that to be the case. I know that he is widely respected by railway workers for the way in which he has performed successive difficult jobs, but those jobs have been done within a unified railway system, in which some senior managers are themselves responsible for safety matters.

What concerns many Opposition Members about the proposed management buy-outs is the fact that they will be commercially driven and commercially led. Senior managers responsible for signalling safety, for example, will have neither the inclination nor the resources to be caught up in MBOs—which may well be led by people who understand how to turn over a quick profit, especially with the subsidies that we are discussing, rather than by senior managers directly concerned with safety.

One extremely senior manager to speak out against the proposals was Mr. Peter Rayner, formerly regional movements officer of the former London midland region. He was responsible for all train movements in the region. After the Clapham disaster, he denounced the fragmentation of the railway industry on the grounds of its likely impact on railway safety. Soon afterwards, he was transferred from his post and given a job that had been specially created; he described it to me as involving something called psychometric testing. I do not envy *Hansard* the task of transcribing that! It was clear that—as he put it himself—Mr. Rayner was a square peg in a round hole. Before long, he took early redundancy and left the railway industry. So much for railway managers' being allowed to speak freely about the damage that they expect to be done to their industry.

The hon. Member for Southport (Mr. Banks) said that the Government had given various assurances about safety. What assurances from the present Government can we believe or trust? They have given many assurances about other matters that we shall debate today and tomorrow, but those assurances do not appear to have satisfied many people.

6.15 pm

As my hon. Friend the Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill) suggested, financial matters lie at the heart of the amendments. I never thought that he and I would be in the Chamber bemoaning the fact that railway subsidies were to rise. For many years, we have pursued successive Ministers—successive Governments, indeed—on the subject of expenditure in the industry. The fact is that, as my hon. Friend points out, the increased subsidy will not provide a single extra service, a single refurbished railway station or a single extra member of staff at a country station. The money will be used—purely in the short term—to bribe people to become involved in purchasing a franchise to operate a railway service.

Will anyone seriously wish to put up a considerable sum, whether it is their own money or the Government's—the Minister cannot tell us how much will be involved, because he does not know—to operate a railway service on track owned by another, in the short term, publicly owned company—Railtrack, which itself must achieve an 8 per cent. return? Would any Conservative Member do so?

I note that the hon. Member for Worcester (Mr. Luff) has returned to the Chamber. A few weeks ago, he and I engaged in a short television debate; the last question I asked him was how much of his money he would put up to purchase the railway that runs through his constituency. After all, it is a hundred years or so since the Oxford, Wolverhampton and Worcester railway—known, for some reason, as the Old Worse and Worse, which does not augur particularly well for the future—disappeared into the maw of the Great Western railway.

Unfortunately, the programme ended before I could get a straight answer from the hon. Gentleman; however, I should like to know how much of his own money he is willing to put in—as a great supporter of this damned piece of legislation—if there is a management buy-out of the former Old Worse and Worse. Alas, answer came there none; but let me presuppose that the hon. Gentleman will not bankrupt himself, although he may well expect railway managers to bankrupt themselves.

My hon. Friend the Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion) spoke of morale in the railway industry. I have been connected with the industry, in various junior capacities, since the mid-1950s—or, rather, the late 1950s; I should not make myself sound older than I am. I have never known morale to be as low as it is now, from the very top to the very bottom. The Government must accept some responsibility. If they think that managers whose morale has been virtually crushed by their attitude will now rush into MBOs at the behest of the Bill, they have another think coming.

It is nearly 15 long years since the Conservatives came to office. During that time, every member of the British Railways Board has been appointed by a Conservative Secretary of State—or, in some cases, reappointed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. I have allowed a fairly broad debate, but this goes far beyond the general duties of the Secretary of State or, indeed, the regulator.

Mr. Snape: I beg your pardon, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but if the general duties of managers in the industry are to mean anything, we must consider how the industry has

[Mr. Snape]

been managed under various Conservative Administrations. However, at your behest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I shall move on from that argument.

If Railtrack is expected to make the return envisaged under the Bill, railway management will not rush to participate in management buy-outs. The budgetary constraints to which my hon. Friend the Member for Streatham referred are likely to come sooner rather than later. Like him, I appeal to the Minister for Public Transport to assure us that moneys pledged for management buy-outs and for the investment envisaged in the railway industry—which will be privatised if the Government's majority is brought to bear tonight—will not be cut in the Budget later this month. Will he also assure us that that money and investment will not be subjected to the invariable trimming that takes place every time that it is deemed necessary for the axe to fall on public expenditure projects?

If the Minister is serious about encouraging managers to become involved in the future of their industry, the Government will have to perform differently from the way in which they have performed in recent years. If we are made to stagger through the effects of another round of public expenditure cuts, which will fall on the railway industry in particular, morale among managers will collapse even further. That is not good for those who work in the industry; nor, from the Conservative party's point of view, is it good for those who use railway services. I hope that the Minister will give those assurances: those on financing are essential not only from a political point of view but from the point of view of the future of the railway industry.

Mr. Heppell: It is disappointing that, at this late stage of the Bill's passage, hon. Members are in so much of a muddle about the Bill. That muddle was not foreseen when the Bill was introduced or during its Committee stage. The amendments have now been tabled because the Government got the Bill wrong in the first place.

Sometimes people look for complicated arguments to explain the reasons of the Bill. The truth is that there are two reasons for it. The first is Government dogma that privatisation is good and the public sector is bad. The Secretary of State, knowing that being appointed Secretary of State for Transport was likely to be a stepping stone to spending more time with his family, wanted to flex his muscles and show the backwoodsmen on the Government Back Benches that he was made of stern stuff and that he would tackle privatisation. That is the main reason why we are here today. The second reason is simple: the Government have recognised that there are massive amounts of money in British Rail's pension funds and have been trying to get hold of those funds. Those are the reasons why we are here.

The Government had no idea how privatisation should take place, which explains the muddle. If we start from the basis of not knowing where we are going, we may end up where we do not expect to be, which is why the Government are still tabling amendments. In Committee, we seldom had a chance to discuss a clause, because before we could do so the Government amended it. We seldom had a chance to discuss amendments, because before we could do so the Government amended them. I am sure that the House of Lords has been through a similar process, with amendment after amendment being tabled. In effect, no one has discussed the original proposals.

There are two specific reasons for Lords amendment No. 1. The first is to cloud and disguise the Government's feelings about BR being able to bid. An amendment was tabled in the other place to allow BR to bid for franchises. Rather than impose conditions that make it impossible for BR to bid, why will not the Government come clean and admit that they oppose the amendment that was passed in the House of Lords and admit that they are doing all they can to frustrate it?

The second reason is Ministers' fears that privatisation will be a failure because insufficient people are prepared to bid. We were told that people in the private sector were queuing up to participate in this great enterprise, but they have not materialised. However, the Government now seem to welcome the thought of a few management buy-outs.

Let us face facts. The private sector will not be attracted without sufficient bribes, which will be given at the expense of the taxpayer. There will be no more management buy-outs without sufficient bribes. Who has heard of such nonsense? The Government talk about a level playing field and about competition, yet they say, "We shall issue a tender under which everyone is equal, but we shall pay for adverts placed by those who tender to help them to bid."

The original purpose of the Bill was to ensure competition. The hon. Member for Surrey, North-West (Sir M. Grylls) spouted about how marvellous it will be when we have competition. Competition has long since been abandoned. It went many months ago when the Government abandoned the idea of open access. After that, they abandoned the idea of anyone competing against the franchisee, effectively ensuring that, when a franchisee won a bid it would have a monopoly on the service. Here is the clearest demonstration that there is no competition. The purpose of the amendment is to allow anyone to bid except BR.

British Rail's management have been encouraged to bid. They have been allowed up to £100,000 of taxpayers' money to prepare their bids. They have been allowed 85 per cent. of the cost of the first £10,000 in preparing their bids and 75 per cent. of the cost of the remainder, with a £100,000 cap on preparation. Is that a sufficient bribe? If it is, it still has not worked. As my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) explained, of the 25 directors in charge of existing profit centres that can become TOCs—train operating companies—only five are in the process of becoming such companies. It is interesting that there are so many new words to learn, and TOCs may be one of them. "TOCing" may go into the dictionary. That is not to be mistaken for "TWOCing" —taking without the owner's consent. "TOCing" may have the same definition in the dictionary, but it may or may not mean having consulted the Secretary of State or Minister first.

If we have been bribing management to prepare bids by giving them up to £100,000 to bid against the publicly owned company that we are financing, who is running the railways in the meantime? If the management are not needed to run the railways, one has to ask whether that is the type of management that we want in the first place.

6.30 pm

The truth is that there are no companies ready to bid. Only two companies—British Bus and Stagecoach—participated in a recent seminar held, I think, in August, by the Health and Safety Executive. Not one other company turned up to find out what the safety procedures would be on franchised railways. That tells me one of two things: no other companies are interested in bidding for the franchises or only two companies were sufficiently interested in safety to attend the seminar.

I have no time for the Minister's reassurances about safety. As I said in Committee, if the Minister believed that the recommendations in the Health and Safety Executive's report needed to be implemented, he would have included them in the Bill so that they had to be implemented. Similarly, we had hoped that many pension arrangements would have been included in the Bill. If they had been, tens of thousands of pensioners would not now believe that they have been ratted on by the Secretary of State, who, in effect, gave guarantees to the House which have now been broken in Government admendments.

Mr. Elfyn Llwyd (Meirionnydd Nant Conwy): You referred to competition. Even if it were still covered in the Bill, do you agree that it is a complete waste of time——

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order. I remind the hon. Gentleman that he should be addressing me.

Mr. Llwyd: I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker. The hon. Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell) said that competition was a dead letter in the Bill. My rural constituency contains one west coast railway and one in the north; what possible use is discussion about competition in such an area? I am sure that the socially necessary services are of great concern to us all. My understanding is that the Treasury rules would not allow a guaranteed subsidy for more than three years. I discussed that issue with the Minister earlier this year and I await a reasoned response even now.

The hon. Member for Nottingham, East also mentioned "TOCing", he might be interested to know that the word "tocio" in Welsh means "to cut back".

Mr. Heppell: I thank the hon. Gentleman for that helpful intervention. I agree that the very idea of competition has completely disappeared from the Bill. It is no longer relevant. It is certain that the Government will not allow proper and free competition, including the participation of British Rail. One has only to consider the drafting of the franchising director's powers. When considering bids for services, the criteria will not be who is making the cheapest bid, who is the most efficient or effective or who will provide the best service to passengers or customers. Not one of those criteria will be relevant when BR makes a bid.

Government amendment (a) in lieu of Lords amendment No. 31 states that the franchising director will not have to consider the inclusion of a bid by BR unless it is desirable

> "(a) for the purpose of promoting competition for franchises;
>
> (b) for the purpose of promoting the award of franchise agreements to companies in which qualifying railway employees have a substantial interest;
>
> (c) for the purpose of encouraging new entry to the passenger railway industry;
>
> or
>
> (d) for the purpose of preventing or reducing the dominance of any person or person in the market for the provision in Great Britain, or in any part of Great Britain, of services for the carriage of passengers by railway."

Each paragraph means that BR will be left out of the equation. If the Minister and the Secretary of State are not saying that BR is being told that it cannot bid, will the Minister tell the House in what circumstances will it be allowed to bid?

Mr. Bayley: Clause 4, to which the amendments relate, deals with the Secretary of State's powers, and I am pleased to see him back in the Chamber. I should like him to deal with a point raised in paragraph (a) in Lords amendment No. 2, which instructs the regulator to take note of the Secretary of State's guidance. Precisely what guidance will the Secretary of State give the regulator about the need to promote freight on the railways? With reference to paragraph (b), what action will the regulator take to promote the use of rail freight?

Paragraph 46 of the White Paper claims that privatisation

> "offers the best prospect of attracting new freight to rail with the environmental benefit that this will bring."

The Minister of State made a similar point in Committee. He said:

> "It is extremely important to protect the interests of all users of the railway network—passengers and freight—and to promote the use of the railway network."

Later that day, he said:

> "We want Railfreight to develop all sensible business that can be handled by rail."—[*Official Report, Standing Committee B*, 16 February 1993; c. 136-65.]

On 9 March the Minister told the Committee that new Government grants would be introduced which

> "will broaden the benefit given to the rail operator"—

vis-a-vis the road operator—

> "by taking account of the environmental damage caused by heavy goods vehicles on trunk roads and motorways".—[*Official Report, Standing Committee B*, 9 March 1993; c. 675.]

The rhetoric is fine but, sadly, privatisation will have exactly the reverse effect: it will drive freight business off the railway on to the roads.

Let us take the case of Trainload Freight. In 1992-93, it made a profit of £103 million. I have today seen a memorandum from Graham Smith, Trainload Freight's corporate planning manager. It was dated 13 September 1993 and was sent to all members of the Trainload executive, the board of this British Rail subsidiary. It shows that the company's profits will fall. In 1994-95, profits are expected to be down to £53 million. The following year, it is anticipated that they will be down to £9 million, rising slightly the following year to £17 million and to £27 million the year after.

However, if one takes account of the large number of redundancies expected in the freight sector, which we discussed in Committee, the cash contribution that the company will manage after having met the redundancy payments will fall from more than £100 million last year to £46 million next year, to £4 million the year after and to zero—no profit whatsoever—the following year. That is hardly the rate of return that a private owner would expect on a £400 million business. It does not give much confidence for the future or in the prediction that privatisation will, in the words of the White Paper, move freight from road to rail for environmental reasons.

Senior British Rail managers are telling Ministers that the privatisation of the freight business is a one-way ticket

[Mr. Bayley]

to liquidation. No wonder there is so much in the Bill about administration orders, winding-up procedures and insolvency: that is what privatisation will do to the freight business.

I have a verbatim record of a meeting between British Rail's chief executive, John Welsby, Trainload Freight managers with the Minister for Public Transport on 11 October 1993. Mr. Welsby said:

"I'm just about to appoint three managing directors and I don't want to send them off on bum prospects".

Those managing directors have now been appointed. They are Kim Jordan for the south-eastern division of Trainload Freight, Ian Braybrook for the north-eastern division and Julian Worth for the western division. Is the Secretary of State sending them off on bum prospects? Everyone in Trainload Freight is complaining that the fragmentation —the three-way split of their company—will mean that the operation will lose economies of scale.

At the same meeting, Welsby told the Minister:

"You are in a hole and still digging. I don't see how there will be anything still to sell, certainly not the cake, just the cherries."

John Welsby is clearly picking up language used by my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott), who was the first to talk about cherry picking as the likely consequence of privatisation. The Minister replied to Mr. Welsby:

"Thank you for your clear and forthright presentation. The message is not surprising. I've understood the message for some time."

I can imagine the Minister saying precisely that, because he said similar things in Committee. Later at the same meeting, the chief executive of British Rail said:

"All you'll be left with is a car boot sale. I'm not joking. We are playing a zero sum game with a totally inelastic market. Every plus is a minus to another rail player. I've got an instruction to start releasing surplus assets. You've even asked for a telephone number."

The Minister replied:

"I wouldn't quite put it like that."

With some menace, John Welsby said:

"You'll have to sort this one out."

Will the Secretary of State sort it out; more to the point, how will he sort it out at this late stage? When will the Government abandon their poisonous love affair with the juggernaut? When will they stop driving traffic from the railways on to the roads? When will they stop building roads through areas of outstanding natural beauty? When will they stop poisoning people with car fumes and move the traffic from the roads to the railways, as they promised —because they certainly will not achieve that through privatisation?

Mr. Gunnell: I want to comment briefly on clause 4, and in particular on the proposed encouragement of management buy-outs. I believe that, even against the background of the Government's own wishes and intentions, this has not been set about in the right way. We spent 16 hours discussing the clause in Committee. We recognise that the Secretary of State and the regulator have wide-ranging responsibilities under that clause. Price, quality, safety and, as my hon. Friend the Member for York (Mr. Bayley) pointed out, the effect on the environment are all the responsibility of the Secretary of State and the regulator, who must make the best possible regulations and arrangements to fulfil these responsibilities. It is thus understandable that the Government should take the view that they want British Rail managers to be involved in management buy-outs. I can therefore understand the Government's motivation in introducing a proposal by which they seek to ensure that that happens.

The Government seem to be adopting an extremely doctrinaire position, however. In effect, they are seeking to castrate Lords amendment No. 31 and render it ineffective. That is not a satisfactory way of proceeding—even to get what they themselves want—and an alternative means ought to have been found.

6.45 pm

I was interested to hear that the venture capital industry has little interest in management buy-outs or in the Bill itself. The industry is uncertain about the future and believes that the arrangements that are being put in place are wholly risky. The risks are not risks that most members of the industry want to enter into. Why is the venture capital industry so concerned about and so distant from the legislation, given that, as my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) said, the new arrangements will cost us £1·15 billion more than the present arrangements? One would have thought that there would be a lot of money to go around and therefore much by way of potential profit for the industry to garner. One wonders why the industry has no enthusiasm for the Bill.

We must consider what makes a successful management buy-out. I not only have experience of the bus industry buy-out in west Yorkshire but have been involved in a number of other management buy-outs, albeit from a different point of view. It seems to me that such buy-outs have certain qualities in common which have led to their success. The motivation of the managers, their ability to manage and their understanding of their own market are crucial.

Many British Rail managers regard the management buy-out option as the lesser of two evils. Either their job as a whole will be under threat because BR will not be performing the function in question, or they become part of a separate company in order to bid. Choosing the less unsatisfactory option is not the basis on which to form a successful company. The managers have to have enthusiasm and have to want to enter into such an arrangement before the Minister offers them £100,000 to set up. In the context of the services that they will run, £100,000 will not make a very great difference. In the case of successful management buy-outs, one usually finds that those involved are extremely enthusiastic about making money. Enthusiasm about making money is not a quality that is innate in British Rail managers and it does not seem to me that the Bill will help them to acquire that attitude.

It is hard to understand why the Government have not taken the view that to allow British Rail to bid—and bid on an honest and untrammelled basis—would be a far better way of ensuring that services proceeded satisfactorily. Moreover, they should realise that, had they allowed BR to bid for franchises, they would have created circumstances in which many BR managers would have learnt how to operate franchises in the context of belonging to BR.

The Government have told us what they ultimately want —if they, and the Bill, survive long enough for the provisions to come into effect. I can only say that, had they operated as I suggest, they would in effect have been training people who were capable of managing a separate franchise company; instead, they are making people managers and creating their companies for them—or

providing the wherewithal at least to get them started—without ensuring that they have the expertise that they would need to make a success of the Bill.

I say that knowing that the Bill is fatally flawed. Like my hon. Friends, I believe that it is wholly misplaced. It is hard to see the scope for any profitability in the whole process, other than through direct subsidy from the public purse. My experience of dealing with transport and pricing tells me that, if one increases the price, one reduces the number of passengers. Even if they could produce rapidly the quality that the Minister sought, those who managed the companies would find themselves hemmed in by considerations of price and passenger numbers so that the only way in which their company could become profitable would be by an increased subsidy from the public purse. Therefore, we must be clear that the legislation provides for privatisation at public expense.

The fundamental question of my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North must be addressed. He stressed the lack of motivation among managers as revealed in a survey. However, he also identified the additional costs as a result of this way of tackling the rail system. Those costs, £1·15 billion, are high. It is quite clear that they are the price of dogma and not of practicality.

Mr. Prescott: I do not need to detain the House for long on this issue. From our debate on the amendment, it is clear that one factor has characterised the Bill from the very beginning: the Government have constantly changed their position. In Standing Committee, the Government moved amendments which altered announcements that they made at previous sittings. The Lords amendment is another example of that.

The amendment refers to the Secretary of State's general duties in respect of which he will direct the regulator. According to the Bill, it is the Secretary of State's duty

"to exercise the functions assigned or transferred to him under or by virtue of this Part in the manner which he considers best calculated".

The Bill then makes those calculations clear. They are

"(a) to protect the interests of users of railway services".

The Secretary of State must make that judgment. The calculations continue:

"(b) to promote the use of the railway network . . . (c) to promote efficiency and economy".

I like the next calculation:

"(d) to promote competition".

I am not sure whether it has anything to do with competition. As other hon. Members have made clear, only one franchise will be operated on a particular line. There will be no competition. Preference in a bid will be given to the private sector bidder even if the BR bid is better. Quite frankly, this has nothing to do with competition. Clearly, the idea that competition is the best way to provide a better railway service for railway users is in doubt.

The Minister for Public Transport referred us to the debates that took place in the other place. That was a bit of a cheek. I hope that he will give us a proper explanation of the amendments, as that is what the House would expect. It would be proper for him to do that.

It has been difficult to study the 450-odd Lords amendments in detail, because they became available in their present form only last Thursday. I want to raise a little protest. The Lords amendments refer to specific clauses. As I understand it, the relevant lines are not numbered in Lords amendments. That makes it extremely difficult to find the relevant sections. I hope that that procedure will be simplified because I spent most of Sunday trying to relate the amendments to the Bill. I do not recommend that exercise to anyone, but I had to do that in order to find out exactly what the Lords amendments did to the Bill. If the relevant lines were marked in the margin, that would make it much easier for us to make better contributions. I hope that we can all agree that that change should be made and that my protest will be noted in the appropriate quarters.

The Minister asked us to assess, according to the Lords amendment, that the regulator could give preference to a bid from a company in which British Rail employees have a substantial interest. The Minister said that he could not define "substantial". Clearly, someone will have to define "substantial" because it is a crucial point. If BR employees held 1 per cent. or 2 per cent. of a buy-out, that would clearly not be considered to be substantial.

I do not understand why the Minister cannot have a stab at defining "substantial". For example, in monopolies legislation, control of the market relates to more than 30 or 40 per cent. There are various areas in respect of which we must make judgments. Someone will have to judge and it would not be wise to leave it to the courts. The Government must have an idea of what constitutes a substantial bid.

I am afraid that the Secretary of State will direct the regulator to give preference to a certain bid, such as an up-front employee buy-out in which BR employees represent only 10 per cent. of the company. The private sector would be using those employees to achieve a cheaper bid. That seems a very curious way of bidding for franchises. The only competition in the Bill is that for subsidies. As the Minister made clear, very few franchises will make a profit. That is why we are arguing about the £2 billion which is double the largest public service obligation payment.

The Secretary of State appeared on "On the Record" at the weekend. I could not challenge him on that programme as I was taken off it. He said that the £2 billion was not for one line. We know that. The £2 billion referred to in the Department of Transport document is assessed on the basis of apportioning a profit to the rate of return, or return on capital, for the track or assets. That calculation amounts to £2 billion. However, the Department's document makes no assessment of the operator's profit because that has not been calculated. The figure that we are talking about is £2 billion-plus.

If BR had been given a fraction of that money to run a good railway system, it would be fair to judge whether BR could run a good service. Instead, BR has been forced to live on a quarter of the resources and to cut available services. Because of the inadequate resources made available to it, BR has been forced to cut services and it has been condemned for that. If the private sector makes a bid under Lords amendment No. 1, all sorts of money will be available for that bid, but that money is denied to BR. That is unfair.

As hon. Members have said, there is so much of a tilt towards a management buy-out because the Government had a difficulty in the other place. Their Lordships supported the idea that BR should be allowed to bid for a franchise and the Opposition will support that when we reach that part of the debate. British Rail, as a corporate body, should be allowed to bid exactly as happens in

[Mr. Prescott]

Sweden in similar circumstances. The Government will oppose that when we reach those amendments later. The alternative is to allow a few managers to buy in.

As was made clear earlier, the reason for all this concern about management buy-outs is that we no longer hear the rhetoric about 30 companies lining up to bid for the franchises. Virgin has made it very clear that it would have difficulty bidding in such circumstances. Stagecoach ran a service which collapsed. Stagecoach sued me for saying that it collapsed. I said that outside and I repeat it here. That service no longer remains and that sounds to me as though it has collapsed. It was taken off before the lease to run the system ran out.

The private sector is no longer talking about bids. The Minister does not want to give BR an opportunity because he made it clear at the earliest stages of the Bill that if BR were allowed to bid for franchises it would punch a big hole in the Bill, so the Minister has had to concoct a formula to allow managers to bid.

I do not know whether the Secretary of State has talked to the managers to discover whether they agree with privatisation or with bids of this kind. I assume that he has done that. I am sure that our evidence, produced by the trade unions in assessing the view of the managers, has been sent to the Secretary of State, so I shall not repeat it, but when asked how many were in favour of privatisation, 88 per cent. were against. When asked whether they were in favour of the British Railways Board handling franchises, 74 per cent. said yes and that they would like to be able to bid for franchises. When asked whether they were in favour of a management buy-out in preference to BRB's bidding, 68 per cent. were very much against that because it would create great tensions within BR.

No doubt those managers will read the reports of this debate. I must tell them that if they choose to bid in those circumstances to run a private sector railway instead of a public sector railway, they have declared their hand. We believe that it should be a public sector railway. It should be subject to public accountability and meet public needs. We have made clear our position on that point; it could not be clearer. We want managers who believe in the system.

I hope that managers who make bids remind themselves that, if it goes back to a publicly owned system, we might look elsewhere for managers rather than look to those who have shown their hands. *[Interruption.]* That is fair for managers who judge whether they should change their careers and pension arrangements and bid for a private sector line or remain in the public service.

The Government's principle is that BR will still run the majority of services. We still want BR to run services. It is fair for the Opposition to want people who believe in a publicly owned system running a public railway. I hope that the message will go out loud and clear to those who seek to depart from that position. That is the point that I make to managers who are considering making bids. They have made their position clear.

The amendment is solely about trying to save the Government's face. There are no private sector people queuing up to bid, even with the massive bribes being offered to them. The Government will deny British Rail the right to make bids—that is clear from what they have said—and they hope that a few managers will be encouraged to get together with the private sector. We are against that and we shall oppose the amendment.

We will not vote against all the amendments because there is insufficient time to deal with all the important issues. We shall therefore vote on amendment No. 1 and not push votes on the other amendments, although we are clearly against other amendments. We want to make it clear that we believe in British Rail having the right to run services. The amendment undermines British Rail's corporate ability to do that.

7 pm

Mr. Freeman: I will seek to answer as concisely as I can some of the points that have been raised in this important debate. It has taken two hours, but it has covered very important issues, and they need to be addressed, albeit as succinctly as I can.

The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) asked what "a substantial interest" is. The Government believe that, in certain circumstances, that can be less than a 50 per cent. interest in the entire equity, but I stand by my earlier remarks—the courts will eventually decide precisely what that definition means. It is clearly because different circumstances will apply in each management and employee buy-out.

The hon. Gentleman again raised the matter of £2 billion, which his colleague the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) raised earlier. I make it absolutely plain that they were quoting from a working document within the Department of Transport. No decision has been taken on the financial regime for Railtrack, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport will settle that matter in due course after the unified Budget which is to be presented at the end of the month.

Clearly, some account must be taken in setting the franchising director's budget for the new regime of track charges that Railtrack will introduce. Therefore, to the extent that Railtrack, a public sector body, earns more, that money will be available to the public sector to provide additional funding not only to the franchising director but, as I have already given commitments to the passenger transport authorities and executives, for the running of railway services. To that extent, the movement of money is circular. My right hon. Friend will be making a clear statement and set the external financing limits not only of British Rail but of Railtrack and the franchising director in due course.

Mr. Wilson: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Freeman: If the hon. Gentleman will forgive me, in a minute or two, when I come to his remarks, I will certainly give way.

The hon. Member for Morley and Leeds, East (Mr. Gunnell) talked about an apparent lack of interest from financial institutions. That is not the case. My right hon. Friend and I have had several meetings with financial institutions, including venture capital interests, and they are interested. This is a very early stage in the franchising process. We do not expect the majority of the first seven franchises actually to be let until 1995. It is very early days.

The hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley) referred to Trainload Freight. Of course there is a conflict or a

dilemma—to be resolved, as I admitted in Standing Committee and I admit now; intellectually, it is obvious—between maximising receipts from the sale of Trainload Freight and maximising open-access competition. That we will do.

We have not yet resolved the regime for the Trainload Freight companies or the degree to which, for example, surplus wagons and engines will be available to new entrants, but we are determined to ensure that we have managers in place not only for the Trainload Freight companies but also, I expect, for private companies to make maximum possible use of our rail freight network in this country. The initiatives that we have put in place—for example, that track charges will be based on avoidable costs, widening the section 8 criteria for grants to new rail terminals, and the track subsidy regime—are intended to promote the use of rail freight.

The hon. Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell) asked about private sector interest and whether it has materialised. I repeat the assertion that I made at the beginning: I have visited most—*[Interruption.]* It is an assertion, because I am not producing any evidence to the House tonight. I am asserting that I have visited most of the potential rail franchises and I have found considerable enthusiasm among senior management for our proposals. They are anxious to get on with the process of franchising.

The hon. Members for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape) and for East Lothian (Mr. Home Robertson) talked about safety. I repeat again that the Health and Safety Commission, on behalf of the Health and Safety Executive, made 37 recommendations about safety. The Government accepted all of them, as did British Rail. The Health and Safety Executive will have overall responsibility for safety, and Railtrack will administer the regime on a day-to-day basis. The Government do not accept that the privatised railway will be any less safe than British Rail.

The hon. Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion) said that, according to his information, the east coast main line, while in public ownership, will continue to run through services to Inverness and Aberdeen. I am delighted. When the franchising director franchises the service, it will be based on the services that British Rail runs immediately prior to franchising. Therefore, the hon. Gentleman should draw some reassurances from what he has been told.

The hon. Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill) asked several questions about Railtrack. Railtrack is not on the face of the Bill because several possible network operators—owners of infrastructure—could be in play in future years, including Railtrack. That is obviously one, and certainly the major, operator. The hon. Gentleman asked whether franchisees could buy operations and infrastructure—a vertical integration. That is not the Government's policy, and we have made that plain. Apart from one limited exception, which will be the case of the Isle of Wight, that is not our policy, and that is set out very clearly in the draft objectives to the franchising director.

The hon. Member for Streatham asked about access charges, as did the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North. As I have said, we have not set the financial regime, but Coopers and Lybrand has now completed a substantial part of its work. From today, freight operators will be able to obtain a quote on the track charges that will apply to them when they start running services.

On passenger services, I make the obvious point that, because the franchising director will be essentially acquiring access to the whole of the railway network, the franchising director will be providing Railtrack with a substantial part of Railtrack's income and taking the revenue risk on the ability to franchise.

Mr. Wilson: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Freeman: I was going to answer the hon. Gentleman's points. Perhaps he would like to hear the answers first.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North quoted the survey conducted by TSSA, one of the three major rail unions. The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East was good enough to admit that it might be a little partisan. That does not square with the evidence before the Department. There is significant interest on the part of senior rail managers who actually run the trains in the different divisions. *[Interruption.]* I would be very happy in due course, as and when the franchising director receives bids and then lets franchises, to make sure that the public are well aware of the interest.

In commending the Lords amendments——

Mr. Wilson: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Freeman: No, I must finish. *[Interruption.]* I am answering the hon. Gentleman's points.

In commending the amendments to the House, I draw attention to the two points that the Opposition spokesman has made tonight. First, the Opposition are opposed to British Rail managers and staff bidding for franchises. They should tell that to British Rail management. Many managers want the chance to have an equity interest in running British Rail. Secondly, the hon. Gentleman is quite clear and candid—he does not want to break British Rail's monopoly. I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Surrey, North-West (Sir M. Grylls) that breaking the monopoly, permitting competition and permitting the private sector to come in will revolutionise rail services and will improve the quality of service.

Mr. Wilson: With the leave of the House——

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am afraid that it is not possible under the rules to permit the hon. Gentleman to speak again. I understand the hon. Gentleman's disquiet, but I cannot permit that.

Mr. Wilson: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. Is it in order for the Minister to say that he will give way and then not give way? Is that not a breach of the courtesies of the House, if not of its rules?

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am afraid that it is not a matter for the Chair and therefore one on which I cannot rule.

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment:—

The House divided: Ayes 321, Noes 283.

Division No. 378] **[7.09 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*	Ashby, David
Aitken, Jonathan	Aspinwall, Jack
Alexander, Richard	Atkins, Robert
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*	Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*	Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Amess, David	Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Ancram, Michael	Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Arbuthnot, James	Baldry, Tony
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*	Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*	Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*

Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Ruclif)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Smyth, Rev Martin *(Belfast S)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'fld)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Robert G. Hughes and Mr. Michael Brown.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe

Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hume, John
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCrea, Rev William
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McGrady, Eddie
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle and
Mr. John Spellar.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Subsequent Lords amendments agreed to.

Dr. Marek: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I rose to speak during the previous debate, but you put the question without raising your eyes, and did not see me. When you next put a question, will you perhaps raise your eyes to see whether some of us on the Back Benches are still trying to enter the debate?

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry that I missed the hon. Gentleman. I genuinely thought that all those Back Benchers who wished to contribute had already done so.

Clause 5

GENERAL DUTIES OF THE FRANCHISING DIRECTOR

Lords amendment: No. 4, in page 6, line 4, after ("to") insert—("(i)")

Mr. Freeman: I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Madam Deputy Speaker: With this we may take Lords amendments Nos. 5, 32, 34 to 36, 38 to 43, 124 to 130 and 133.

Mr. Freeman: Lords amendment No. 4 is grouped with a number of other amendments for the convenience of the debate. The main purpose of——*[Interruption.]*

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. This is not a gossiping session. If hon. Members wish to remain, they should stay silent. If they wish to go, they should do so quietly.

Mr. Freeman: The main purpose of the group of amendments is to deal with the implications of our announcement on the future for railway stations. There are a number of technical amendments on which I shall be happy to respond if there are any especial questions. I am sure that it would help the House if I explain why we need amendments to the Bill to deal with our policy on the operation of stations.

Through franchise arrangements, we propose to allow franchisees, also, to operate—that is to say manage—stations. The scope of that operation could include light maintenance depots, for example, where the railway trains are maintained on a weekly basis. It is clear to us that the Bill needs to be amended to make it clear that a franchisee will be able to operate—possibly under a lease arrangement as we currently intend—the stations along the line of the route or routes that fall within the franchise area.

For some larger stations, of which there probably number no more than two dozen, separate arrangements may be appropriate, but for most stations—there are 2,500 in the British Rail network—the majority will be run by and managed for a period conterminous with the franchise arrangement by the franchisee; the train operating company. Those companies will be responsible not as freeholders of the building, but for car parking and ticket arrangements, for facilities available for passengers and for train, information systems on the stations. That is common sense.

There are some large stations—a number outside the metropolis—where we want to encourage the private sector to be involved in the development of stations, especially in the air rights above stations. Where it might be sensible to bring in separate private sector managers of the commercial facilities such as the shops——

Mrs. Dunwoody *rose*——

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Lady has obviously not been to Liverpool Street station or to Victoria or to Waterloo and seen the benefits of the development.

Mrs. Dunwoody: Is not the Minister making it clear that, if no money can be made by running a railway, there can always be development of the air space above the railway which can be leased out to any property developer who wants to build something of the enormous architectural brilliance of Alban Gate?

Mr. Freeman: I am surprised that the hon. Lady doubts that there are opportunities from the development of station premises that would benefit Railtrack, and therefore the rail infrastructure. That seems perfectly straightforward to me.

7.30 pm

Dr. Marek: I accept that some railway stations in metropolitan areas and in the capital could have such developments. What will the Lords amendments do for my constituents who use Wrexham station? The station is rotten and water is seeping through it. It is dank and it has not been repaired for years. Rooms in it have been available for letting for years and years, but there have been no takers. How will the amendments change that?

Mr. Freeman: Certainly the hon. Gentleman's station does not seem to be a good opportunity for major private sector development. I am sure that the hon. Gentleman summarises the position accurately. However, Railtrack will have continuing responsibilities for the maintenance of the infrastructure and, together with the train operating companies—the franchisees—will ensure that facilities are modernised to attract passengers on to the railway. I do not know the hon. Gentleman's station, although I am sure that I shall visit it during one of my travels in his part of the country.

The announcement by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport about new opportunities for railway stations made it clear that the freeholds would be retained by Railtrack and that the majority of stations would be leased to the franchised train operators. Railtrack will develop options for the larger stations, including sales on long leases of up to 125 years. There will be safeguards, which are replicated in the Lords amendments, for train operators and passengers through station access. The hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley) has raised the point on a number of occasions. We must ensure that train operators have proper access to all stations through which they run services, and that is provided for in the amendments.

I shall be happy to respond to any specific points. I hope that I have been helpful to the House in explaining the main policy purpose behind the amendments. I commend them to the House.

Mr. Wilson: The main policy purpose of the Lords amendments appears to be to flog the largest stations at which the greatest amount of public investment has already occurred. That is par for the course. I am sure that all hon. Members were interested in the Minister's less than forthright disavowal of the £2 billion figure—a point that is also relevant to the amendments. It was at least an advance on yesterday's performance by the Secretary of State. He purported to believe that the increase in the poublic service obligation grant to British Rail envisaged in his Department's documents referred to one specific line that would be franchised. On the basis that it could not cost an extra £1·15 billion to franchise a single line, he regarded the whole thing as nonsense. We have obviously moved on. Even if the Secretary of State did not recognise the documents, the Minister recognised them, and the £2 billion figure is all too clear.

The message that goes out from the Minister—we do not yet know how the Government will fiddle around trying to avoid this rather embarrassing figure—is that there will be a massive increase in grant not for the

development of railways and not for the development of stations, which we are discussing now, but purely for the restructuring of the railways to accommodate privatisation. That is the message that has come from the Minister this evening.

I point out to Conservative Members who are interested in these matters that the Department of Transport documents, at the highest possible level, envisage a £1·15 billion increase in the PSO grant to the railways to pay for privatisation in the coming year. The former Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont), when he announced the imposition of VAT on domestic fuel in the same year, 1994-95, said that the sum that he envisaged obtaining in that year from that imposition was £950 million.

That is a measure of the folly of the Government's proposals. They will spend an extra £1·15 billion on privatisating the railways, which is in excess of the amount that they will obtain from the most unpopular tax proposed to Parliament since the poll tax. It is phenomenal testimony to dogma that in the present economic climate the Government seriously propose, as testified in the documents and as tacitly confirmed by the Minister tonight, to increase the taxpayers' subsidy to pay for privatisation by a sum greater than that they expect to collect from VAT on domestic fuel in 1994-95. That is absolutely astonishing and the equation will be noted with great interest outside the House even if Conservative Members choose to shut their ears to it.

We are dealing here with the powers of the franchising director. The Minister has chosen to concentrate rather narrowly on the business of stations. The truth is that the franchising director is the buffer who is being put between the Government and the railway system. He will be the fall guy. In his interview yesterday, the Secretary of State said that various matters would be for the franchising director. Of course they will not. The franchising director is the invention of Government and he will be their creature. The franchising director will follow precisely the political guidelines laid down by the Government.

We see the truth of the matter in the issue of stations. The franchising director is not an independent creature who can franchise our stations. He has already been told that the 13 biggest stations in the country will be disposed of privately on long leases. They will be taken out of the general area of railway franchises. It is no surprise to anyone who knows the people with whom we are dealing and their philosophy that these are not the 13 poorest and most undeveloped stations. They are not the regional railway stations which have been starved of investment. They are the most prosperous stations into which taxpayers' money has already been poured and, of course, they are the stations in which the private sector is already fully represented. They are the places where the work has already been done and on which the money has already been spent, so they are in a fit condition to be handed over to private operators who can skim profits off them.

I do not believe that the private operators whom the Minister and the Secretary of State have in mind will be interested in the revenue that comes from boring things, such as trains, using the stations. There is limited revenue from that. I do not believe that they will be interested in a combination of trains and the existing retail outlets which contribute to the use of stations by passengers. Of course they are not interested in that. They will be interested in air space, which will include everything that can be covered over—everything that can be used for commercial development, for retail development and for office development. If the Tories have their way, some areas will be turned into shopping malls.

I was interested in an article in the *Evening Standard* last week, which I am sure that the Minister has read. It was written by a former colleague of Conservative Members, Mr. Conal Gregory, who had some interesting thoughts on these matters. Mr. Conal Gregory should be an object lesson to Conservative Members. He used to represent the railway constituency of York. He no longer represents that railway constituency and I have no doubt that one of the reasons for his departure from the House was the Government's policy towards the railways.

What did Mr. Conal Gregory, who was heavily billed as a Tory railway and tourism expert, suggest about our great London stations? He suggested that the trains should be moved a mile up the tracks and that whole areas should be covered over and used as shopping malls. That is a bright suggestion and one that has been noted. I saw letters from consumer organisations which said that that was exactly what they had feared from rail privatisation and from the privatisation of stations. The great stations of King's Cross and Paddington, the two that were mentioned specifically, will not be run by people who are committed to the railway industry. They will not be run by people whose primary interest is transport. The great master plan of Ministers is that they will be leased for a hundred-odd years to commercial organisations whose only interest will be in maximising the profit from them.

There will be constant tension between the commercial interests of those operators and the transport interests of the train operators. In those circumstances, I would not bet on the transport interests prevailing for long. Anywhere else that that has been tried—notably the United States—the trains were pushed out, exactly as Mr. Conal Gregory, lately of the Conservative Benches, told us would happen.

There is a parallel with the bus industry. Conservative Members are like parrots when they stand up and tell us about the great successes of privatisation. Have any of them studied what has happened to the bus industry since it was privatised?

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris): Yes.

Mr. Wilson: The Minister is welcome to tell us how many town centres he has visited where the first thing that the privatised operator did was sell off the bus station in the town centre for commercial gain. An awful lot more money can be made by selling off town centre property than by using it as a bus station. We have an exact parallel between that and what could happen with our great railway stations for which that fate is predicted.

I shall make a point that is peculiar to Glasgow, as I had discussions last week with the chairman of the Strathclyde passenger transport executive. As a result of public investment, Central station is now magnificent. As the Minister will be aware, every penny that went into the low-level station, which is part of the Argyll line, was paid for by local taxpayers through the Strathclyde passenger transport executive. One hundred per cent. of the trains that use that station are subsidised by it. The Strathclyde passenger transport executive subsidises 65 per cent. of the trains that use the high-level station.

[Mr. Wilson]

Is the Minister seriously telling us that the Strathclyde passenger transport executive is now to subsidise a private train operator to pay charges to a private station operator for the privilege of using assets and facilities, which, on behalf of the local taxpayer, it has already financed?

Why do the Government have such contempt for taxpayers that they are prepared to see them conned and diddled in every way possible, paying again and again for the assets that they have financed in the first place?

Throughout the country there is an enormous range of qualities in station facilities. By and large, where InterCity has been in charge—there is money in the InterCity system—the public sector stations are good and have excellent facilities. The Minister may dispute that; he may despise anything that the public sector does, but the stations that the Government seek to franchise are good.

One example that was pointed out to me was the comparison between York and Chester. Both cities are the same size, but are on opposite sides of the country. York has an excellent station, which was financed through InterCity; Chester has a pathetic, rundown station because there is no money in the regional railways system. That is the problem. Until now, the railways were given £850 million of subsidy, not £2 billion. That is the contrast.

Where will the money come from? Will it come through Railtrack, through the franchising director or from the franchisees? Is there any guarantee that the stations that have been neglected until now will not continue to decline because of that fundamental lack of money in the system, as proposed by the Secretary of State?

Mrs. Dunwoody: I should like to draw my hon. Friend's attention to the fact that we have an even worse position in Crewe, where, for example, a small fortune is being spent by the taxpayer on maintaining the railway bridge, which is the only direct route used by all emergency vehicles between one half of my constituency and the other.

I am quite clear that no private developer will be prepared to spend the enormous amount of money that is required on that infrastructure. I am afraid that my constituents can look forward to a bleak future.

7.45 pm

Mr. Wilson: Many Labour Members and, if they are honest with themselves, Conservative Members, could tell the same story. But we have a completely untested area, where we have no idea what the operator will be asked to pay via the franchising director to Railtrack. We have no idea what assets Railtrack will have. All we know is that it must make a profit. On that basis, we are asked to believe that there will be additional money in the system and that, as part of the franchises, station facilities will be improved. There is no guarantee of that. There is no doubt that private operators will see stations as halts. They will not see them as a crucial part of their responsibilities. I believe that we shall see further destaffing and not the development of facilities, to which the Minister pays lip service.

We now know more about the franchising director, as we have his draft objectives. The picture becomes clearer about how he will be used as the guard—the fall guy—for what Ministers impose on the railways. The franchising director does not yet know what he will have to charge. I think that the Minister can confirm that. The Minister says that progress has been made on that, but freight is the easy part. Part of the constraint that is placed on the franchising director is precisely that freight is to travel for very little on the tracks because of the belated lip service to the idea of putting more freight on to the railways.

The difficult part, the part that Coopers and Lybrand has so far failed to address, is what the franchise operators will have to pay to the franchising director. Until that is known, the whole thing is simply a charade. The idea that there can be shadow franchises without the shadow franchisee knowing what the principal cost will be is nonsense. Yet already the Government have gone down that road by pressing ahead with the ludicrous and already discredited Gatwick Express experiment—not a shadow franchise, because nobody knows what the shadow franchisee is paying for the use of the tracks and signalling, which is clearly its major overhead.

Many of my hon. Friends wish to participate in the debate. They are concerned about stations and the maintenance depots, which are also covered by the amendment. They are concerned by the idea that the franchising director is a complete unknown quantity, and that the powers that have been given to him are unlikely to produce anything of the kind of railway system that we want to see.

The Opposition will oppose the powers, because we believe that the Minister is seeking to use the franchising director in that way. It is clear from what has happened in stations that the franchising director will not be an independent creature; he will be very much the creature of Government. That will become even clearer when the first few franchises are attempted. The franchising director will be told clearly how much of his budget will go to those private operations to get them up and running. That will be done with a blatant disregard to the interests of the network as a whole.

The idea that that will be the action of the franchising director acting independently, as opposed to acting politically on behalf of the Government who have created him, is something which, at this stage of the debate, should be exposed as pure myth and a fallacy.

We will vote on one of the amendments in order to signify our opposition to the whole system and recognise that the franchising director will not be an independent operator. When he acts against the interests of an integrated national rail network, he will be doing so exclusively in the name of the Government, as clearly presaged by the Bill.

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): I have only one brief point that I want to raise with the Minister in all the amendments.

It seems to me that clause 26(3)(c), as proposed in Lords amendment 42, was the most appropriate. I have endeavoured to play a constructive role in the Railways Bill. The Minister will confirm that, when I heard that the Government were in deep trouble about amendment 31, to which we shall come shortly, which concerns British Rail participating, I tried to propose a way of solving it all by suggesting that we say that no subsidised national operator, whether it be French, German, Italian or British, should be able to participate, which I thought was a helpful compromise. However, as the Minister will confirm, we discovered that a Euro-directive exists which prevents us from doing that, so it unfortunately fell by the wayside. I

hope that the Minister will at least pay tribute to the fact that I have endeavoured, so far as I can, to assist him throughout the proceedings of the Bill.

My question relates to the Fenchurch Street line and the relevance of 26(3)(b) to that. First, I should like to say that the Minister who opened the debate has done a great deal for Southend-on-Sea. He has travelled on the line himself, as I do—I was on it this morning. He has spoken to the passengers and to the staff and given the impression that, for the first time in years, there is a Minister wo is interested in one of the most important lines in commuter land—that between Southend-on-Sea and Fenchurch Street station. That busy line is known as the misery line because, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Southend, West (Mr. Channon) will confirm, the signalling in the station is older than me. [HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] It is possible. Over the years, our constituents have suffered a lamentably bad standard of service.

My right hon. Friend and I were delighted to be told some time ago that new signalling would be installed on the line. That was a great breakthrough because many of the delays result from breakdowns in the ancient signalling system. The Minister also gave us an assurance, when he visited Westcliffe station, that the new operator would be obliged, as part of the deal, to provide new trains on the line. We know that the Minister is an optimist, and it may be that the serious economic situation has made that promise rather less than we hoped, but at least the thought was there, and we appreciate it.

The Minister has tried to bring hope to the commuters of Southend-on-Sea, who have suffered a great deal. Other places may have organisations that oppose rail privatisation, but that is not the case in Southend: we are looking to the future with some hope, as it could not be so bad as the past.

Mr. Bayley: Is not new rolling stock the one thing that would turn misery into joy on the line to Southend? Has the hon. Gentleman any idea whether privatisation would make it more or less likely that the commuters on his line would benefit in that way as people in Kent and other parts of Network SouthEast have recently been fortunate enough to do?

Sir Teddy Taylor: I can only say that the Minister told us—we were thrilled to hear him—as we were coming down from Westcliffe station that the new operator will bring in new trains. The line has never before had new trains. That promise may have to change because of the economic situation, but at least the thought was there, and we now have a much better chance of getting new trains. British Rail has told us that the best that we could hope for was 12-year-old trains. Although the staff are very nice, and British Rail has some delightful people, because of the system, and because of the priority given to the constituency of the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson), the Southend constituencies have been sadly neglected.

Mr. Wilson: My constituency does rather well because a Labour council runs the Strathclyde passenger transport executive. Perhaps if Southend-on-Sea followed that example, it could share equally.

The hon. Gentleman said that nobody in Southend-on-Sea opposed privatisation. That rang a bell, and I dug up an interesting booklet called, "Rail Privatisation: a cause for concern". It lists various comments—from such radical sources as the *Daily Mail* and *The Daily Telegraph*—which are deeply hostile to rail privatisation. Lo and behold, one of the sponsors of the booklet is the Southend-on-Sea rail users association. To give a general flavour, I will give the first comment in the booklet—from Lord Peyton, former Conservative Transport Minister—who said, "Absolutely dotty." Perhaps the hon. Gentleman should check his local information.

Sir Teddy Taylor: I do not want to take up too much time, but I assure the hon. Gentleman that I live in Southend-on-Sea, and I travel on the trains, as I did this morning. I am afraid that the hon. Gentleman is one of those chaps who speaks as an expert on everything. I know Southend. There was hostility, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Southend, West and I are well aware of that, but the Minister has taken a great deal of trouble. We have the promise of new signalling. It is unfortunate that I am being diverted when I am trying to make a simple and sensible point. I wish that the hon. Gentleman would not divert me.

My right hon. Friend will confirm that there is a far more positive feeling in Southend because of the trouble and the measures taken by the Minister, which we very much appreciate. If only other Ministers had the time and inclination to show the same consideration for difficult cases, we should get on better than we are. The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North should be aware that there are Labour councils on the Fenchurch Street line, but things do not get better or worse depending on the political complexion of the council through which the line travels, although in Southend-on-Sea things are usually better because the council is excellent.

My question arising from subsection (3)(c) concerns money. The Minister will be aware that, time and again in correspondence—I always get extremely courteous replies from him—I have asked him how the Southend to Fenchurch Street line is doing financially. My constituents have worries about fare charges, and they would be reassured if they knew the answer. If the amendment goes through, matters will be even more complicated, because the franchisee will have to take a lease on the offices, the railway station and the shops.

I have been the Member of Parliament for Southend, East for 13 years, and I have never yet found out whether the line pays for itself. My right hon. Friend the Member for Southend, West is even more conscientious than I, but he does not know either. The reason is that the accounts of British Rail are drawn up in a strange way. The busier a line is, the more overheads are imposed on it, so 10 passengers will result in more overheads than five. That is a busy line and could become even busier. We should like some idea of how it would perform if it were operated independently, or how it would perform now if overheads were not applied. The Minister has kindly said that he will let us know at an appropriate time. Could this be that appropriate time?

The Minister may say that he wants a trial period, with an independent operation in embryo form, to see how the line performs. That would give us an idea, but once we had got to that stage, we should be over the cliff. We would be there. We should like the Minister, British Rail, or anyone, to give us the information. We think that the line will

[Sir Teddy Taylor]

perform well. The fares are pretty high. Those on the line to Victoria are even higher because the service is better and there are sometimes nicer trains.

After all the Minister's generous concessions and offers to the hard-pressed travelling public of Southend-on-Sea, will he take the further step of giving us a broad idea of how the line performs financially? If it is a bad performer, running at a huge loss, our constituents, and even Lord Peyton, who is a nice chap, would be worried that the fares would rocket up and up, which would be terrible for us.

As the Minister is aware, Southend gets nothing from anyone. For example, we get nothing from the EC nonsense. Everywhere else round about gets money. We do not get Government grants. We were to get something under what is called assisted area status, but unfortunately a man called Mr. Van Miert decided to take 1 per cent. off the budget, and that included Southend-on-Sea. We do not take a penny from the Government. We are the prime example of Conservative capitalism. We try hard to co-operate with everything, but we want a good train service. Unemployment is high and people can sometimes find employment in London, but for that they need a reasonable service at a reasonable cost.

My right hon. Friend the Member for Southend, West and I greatly appreciate the Minister's efforts, and the time that he has taken. He has gone out of his way to answer our problems and questions and to speak to passengers and staff. However, there is a gap. We should like him to give us some idea how the line performs financially. If he cannot do that tonight, will he tell us at the appropriate time? When would be the appropriate time? It was not last year or the year before, six months ago or last week—I tried again last week. If he cannot give us a general idea, will he at least give some reassurance to the good people of Southend by telling us when the appropriate time would be?

I can assure the Minister that that is the only question that I want to raise. Southend-on-Sea is, by and large, far less apprehensive than other places about privatisation, and some are looking forward to it. We hope that it will bring better service.

Mr. Paul Channon (Southend, West): Does my hon. Friend agree that, although there has been a welcome improvement in the Southend line during the past year, the history of the line leads many to believe that it may be a good thing if the line is put into other hands than those of British Rail? Those other hands may well give a better service to our constituents.

Does my hon. Friend also agree that the Minister has on many occasions given assurances about the level of fares and that it would be helpful if the Minister would repeat those assurances? Is my hon. Friend aware that I strongly support him in his belief that we ought to know what the financial arrangements are on the line which, I believe, makes a profit?

Sir Teddy Taylor: I also think that it would be a help if we knew the figures. My right hon. Friend and I have acted as a genuine popular front on the matter, fighting together vociferously and toughly in the interests of our commuters. We hope that the Minister will therefore give a reply on the vital issues to the two hon. Members who represent Southend. We assure him that, if he does reply, we shall simply sit back and believe that the privatisation exercise will give a good deal to the commuters of Southend. I hope that the Minister will give us the guidance that we are looking for, and will fill the one tiny gap in the great efforts that he has made for us until now.

8 pm

Ms Glenda Jackson (Hampstead and Highgate): There are essentially just two subjects on which I would like the Minister to comment. First, who will have the responsibility for stations post-privatisation? Is it incumbent upon the franchising director to insist that a company which wishes, for example, to manage a stretch of stations along a particular line—although the company will not run trains upon that line—will have to ensure that those stations are manned?

The north London line runs through part of my constituency and is, I believe, now totally unmanned at stations. If part of the thrust of the Bill is to increase the use of existing rail networks and expand the use of trains throughout the day and beyond the rush hours—as is particularly the case in London and the south-east—that is a vain hope if the Minister and the Government cannot guarantee that stations will be manned.

The rejection of rail transport because of that aspect is not limited to women, who clearly dislike travelling late at night and having to wait on long and empty station platforms where there are no staff within eyesight or earshot. The impact is also grave for the disabled, whose ability to move around their country and community is excessively limited if there is no one at a station to assist them in alighting or mounting a train.

Who will have the responsibility for stations? Will there be a two-tier system of station facilities depending on which company's train one is travelling on? My hon. Friend the Member for Cunningham, North (Mr. Wilson) referred to InterCity. There are stations which presumably must facilitate passengers travelling by InterCity or on rural and local networks.

Will that mean that, if one travels by InterCity, one will be able to use all the facilities provided—waiting rooms, cafes, restaurants, lavatories and such shops as are available? I am excluding from that inquiry the large stations and terminuses which are clearly attractive to anyone who wishes to run a retail outlet or an office. I have a slight concern that it may at some point be impossible for passengers to catch a train, as there will be so many people on the major station concourses buying knickers, ties, pain au chocolat and coffee to take away.

If I were to join a rural train at a station where the majority of the finance has gone into the station infrastructure, will I be denied the use of the public lavatories, waiting rooms or refreshment facilities? Are we looking at the possibility of a two-tier or even a three-tier system for station networks?

My overriding concern is that there is an increasing movement towards the unmanned stations. That seems to cut directly at what the Government claim to be the main thrust in the privatisation of British Rail—to attract more and more passengers to service outside rush hours.

Mr. John Denham (Southampton, Itchen): The Minister said that amendment No. 5 refers to the powers of the franchising director over other railway assets. Those will include maintenance depots and—although it may not be the Government's intention at the moment—British

Rail Maintenance Ltd. at Eastleigh. The company is an important employer, and although it is not in my consituency, it employs several hundred of my constituents.

I believe that the powers that the Bill will give the Secretary of State and the franchising director pose a serious and severe threat to the future of BRML in Eastleigh and to the hundreds of my constituents who work there.

The achievements of BRML are well known locally. It employs just under 1,350 people, and it has of course had a significant reduction in employment during recent years, because the technology and the demands of the railway system have changed. Nonetheless, BRML is a major industrial employer. Productivity at BRML, and its contribution to the activities of British Rail, has increased significantly. The company is—within the structured competitive framework of an integrated railway system—profitable, and that is important.

The company is marked by good industrial relations. The most important aspect for the workers at BRML is its long-term commitment to the quality of its work and the undoubted contribution that it makes to safety on the railway system, and Network SouthEast—its major customer—in particular. It is obviously of local concern that, through BRML, about £24 million a year is brought into the economy of the Southampton area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. I do not think that the whole history of BRML can be covered under the selection of amendments. The hon. Gentleman must relate his remarks to some of the amendments, which are concerned with miscellaneous franchising matters.

Mr. Denham: Amendment No. 5 amends the clause that refers to the duties of the franchising director in relation to the operation of additional railway assets. I understand that the amendment and the Minister's comments mean that to include the possible franchising of maintenance depots.

It is clear that the Minister does not intend under the Government's policy to include BRML in franchising. However, as I understand it, it is quite possible for BRML to be franchised under the Bill just as the level 4 depots are to be franchised. With respect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that the effect of the Bill on the potential franchising of BRML is an issue of great significance.

Mr. Freeman: I am sorry if I was in any way ambiguous. I stated that the group of amendments dealt with stations and light maintenance depots. That does not include BRML or the heavy maintenance depots, which are totally outwith the activities of the franchising director.

Mr. Denham: Will the Minister clarify whether he is saying that the amendment to the Bill does not include BRML, or is he merely saying that it is not the Government's intention to include BRML within the franchising process?

I am willing to be corrected, but I believe that, under the Bill as amended, it would be quite within the powers of the Secretary of State and the franchising director to franchise the operations of BRML. It might not be the Minister's intention to franchise, but surely the House is dealing with the Bill as it is before us and as amended. The House is not dealing with what the Government might happen to do with the Bill if it were passed.

Mr. Freeman: I have already explained the subject, but obviously I failed to make the point. The group of amendments deals only with stations and light maintenance depots. I have defined what that means, and it specifically excludes heavy maintenance depots such as BRML. Those involve a separate policy issue, and the franchising director will have no direct responsibility for the ultimate movement into the private sector of BRML. That has nothing to do with franchising.

Mr. Denham *rose*——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. Gentleman had better try a little harder if he wants to bring his speech within order.

Mr. Denham: I bow to the Minister's interpretation, although that is not my understanding of the Bill. The Minister accepts that the Bill covers the light maintenance depots. If franchised as part of the development of the franchising system, those depots will be given powers to expand their operations and compete for the work currently done by works such as BRML at Eastleigh. Therefore, the effect of the legislation is, indeed, to put a potential threat over the 1,350 jobs at Eastleigh and the total £24 million contribution of BRML to the local economy.

At this point, as we extend or clarify the role of the franchising director, I question the failure of the Minister to take into account the implications of the policy on other parts of the rail network, and in particular on the safety and quality of operations undertaken by maintenance depots, including BRML, and the future of that work. I believe that the powers which the Government are taking under the amendment pose a threat to both my local railway works and the quality and safety of operations on the railway system.

The Government's approach to the franchising of maintenance depots is mistaken. It is a view widely shared in my area that those who currently provide maintenance services in the railway system and who may well lose that work under the new arrangements have been left as an afterthought or after-afterthought in the preparation for rail privatisation. That is not an adequate approach to an important rail maintenance facility and engineering works in the Southampton area.

In Committee, I asked the Minister whether it would be possible under the franchising arrangements to link BRML to one of the operating companies that would take over the operation of Network SouthEast activities. Network SouthEast is by far the largest customer of BRML. I also asked whether it would be possible to link the works directly with the leasing companies which are to be established for the provision of rolling stock.

I do not have the quotation with me, but I believe that my memory is correct on this point. In Committee, the Minister did not rule out the possibility of grouping BRML with either a leasing company or one of the companies that would franchise rail services. It is a mistake that we have come so far and yet those options have still not been ruled out. It is clear to me that the best way of retaining the activities at BRML and ensuring that they are not undercut by the franchises which are under discussion in the

[Mr. Denham]

amendment would be to make that engineering works an integral part either of one of the franchise operators or of one of the leasing companies.

I know that discussions have taken place between the trade unions, the local council and Ministers on the matter. I know that certain liaison arrangements have been reached and that the possibility of negotiating contracts has been discussed, but a short-term guarantee of work for BRML would not be sufficient.

If the Government push ahead with their wider proposals, a structured approach which builds that maintenance depot into one of the leasing companies will be required. In that way, the expertise of the work force and their contribution to the quality and safety of the rail system can be maintained. I hope that, even at this late stage, the Minister might give some undertaking that he will implement that option and ensure that possibly half or more of the 1,350 jobs in Eastleigh are not lost.

8.15 pm

Mr. Tim Rathbone (Lewes): I should like to raise three matters with my right hon. Friend the Minister. Before doing so, may I add to the comments made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Southend, West (Mr. Channon) and my hon. Friend for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) and echo their thanks to the Minister for his consideration in listening to the points made and for spending an awful lot of time in our part of the country down in Sussex, as he has done elsewhere. He studied the track and the operations and listened to people's concerns. Not only I but all local Sussex Members and local travellers in Sussex are immensely grateful to him for that.

My three questions relate to the operation of stations. First, how will the station leases be operated? It will not be outside the Minister's own experience that the British Rail Property Board can be somewhat conservative in its attitude to real estate development. Over the years, it has held up the clarification of extremely important developments in the county town of Lewes, which I am proud to represent. I hope that hard-edged commercial know-how and push will be injected into the disposal of the leases on the stations to which the Minister referred.

Secondly, can the Minister give reassurances yet again about closures? It would be good to hear a reassurance from my hon. Friend that when a lease on a station has been sold off, it will not be open to the lessee to close that station with greater facility than that which British Rail can close stations at present. I think that I am right in believing that exactly the same closure requirements will be established in the future as in the past, but it would be good to have that reassurance.

Thirdly, it would be good to have a reassurance that, in the development of stations, especially in towns and villages in the countryside the planning laws will be applied, monstrosities will not be put up and changes will not be made to structures which, if not listed as of historical value, are a loved part of the character of the towns and villages in which they have long been located. I hope that the Minister can give reassurances on those points. I should be grateful if he would do so.

Mr. Snape: I congratulate the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) on the succinct and relevant points that he has just made. We shall all listen with interest to the Minister's reply.

I reiterate the comments made by my hon. Friend the Member for Southampton, Itchen (Mr. Denham) about the future of light maintenance depots. I am not sure whether Saltley depot near Birmingham falls into that category, but I suspect that it does. It was featured in a recent issue of *Railnews*, the staff magazine of what is left of British Rail. The article said that the depot provided a vital service to various sectors of British Rail in the Birmingham area—for example, it refuels hundreds of locomotives each working month.

It worries me that if depots such as Saltley are disposed of by the franchising director regardless of their operational necessity, they might be so disposed of because of their value on the property market—always supposing that the property market ever picks up again under the present Administration. The people who work at such depots would appreciate some assurance from the Minister that safeguards will be provided to ensure that the franchising director cannot dispose of useful operational assets solely for their property value.

In passing, I wish to reflect on the line to Southend. I listened with interest to the comments of the hon. Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor). He made his customary passionate defence of the interests of his constituents. I do not complain about it. I commend him on it. Unfortunately, the London-Tilbury-Southend line was modernised before it became part of the London midland and Scottish empire. To demonstrate to the southerners that the London-Tilbury-Southend line was sound, it was electrified and resignalled to the highest possible standards many years ago. The problem is that, when so much of the Victorian signalling of British Rail still remains, lines such as London-Tilbury-Southend go the back of the queue when it comes to modernisation in later years.

The hon. Member for Southend, East specifically asked the Minister whether the London-Tilbury-Southend line was profitable. I am not sure whether the Minister, who answers most questions as ably as he possibly can, is in a position to answer that question. The hon. Gentleman might be aware that, under the Railways Act 1974, the financial performance of individual stretches of railway lines ceased to be compiled—in my view, it was a fairly inexact science before the 1974 Act came into force—and the overall subsidy paid to British Rail since 1974 has swamped the sort of detailed information that the hon. Gentleman requested.

Under the terms of the amendments, it appears that the Minister might be in a position to answer that question some time in the future. Indeed, as far as the future of the London-Tilbury-Southend line is concerned, he might well say that it will be profitable.

Sir Teddy Taylor *indicated dissent.*

Mr. Snape: The hon. Member for Southend, East will not get any more exact answer than that. If the London-Tilbury-Southend line is profitable, it is because the track and signalling costs have been stripped and given to Railtrack.

I hope that I do not have to convince the hon. Gentleman that carrying lots of passengers to London in the morning and taking them home again at night is not a profitable way

of tying up assets worth millions of pounds for 24 hours a day. Under the proposals, if the track and signalling are given to the regulator, the lines may well be profitable.

The hon. Gentleman did not commend the taxpayer generally and the public sector as a whole on providing new signalling on the London—Tilbury—Southend line. I do not think that he received a satisfactory reply from the Minister about the prospects for new rolling stock. Under existing ownership, I understand that 10-year-old or 12-year-old rolling stock is to be cascaded—that is the beloved word of senior management of British Rail—from other parts of the country. That may or may not fit the bill under the new arrangements, but I think that it is the best that the Minister will be able to promise.

I shall ask the Minister some specific questions about the main railway station in the west midlands, Birmingham New Street. He will be aware that, under the existing fragmented, albeit publicly owned, railway system, virtually every sector of British Rail, including Network SouthEast services, serves Birmingham New Street. That station is regarded as the rail crossroads of western Europe. It is possible, although not always convenient, to get from virtually anywhere in England, Scotland and Wales to anywhere else by changing at Birmingham. Surely it should worry the Minister that, under the terms of the amendments, it would be possible to flog off Birmingham New Street to the highest bidder.

My hon. Friend the Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Ms Jackson) referred to some of the commercial outlets at other railway stations. Under the current arrangements, it is possible to buy a whole range of commercial goods, including socks, ties, knickers, hot dogs, Coca-Cola, hamburgers and cheese rolls at outlets at Birmingham New Street. Under the wonderful system proposed, we will have separate booking offices for the different privatised companies.

Under this fragmented, albeit publicly owned, system, it is possible to imagine that there will be a while range of booking office windows at Birmingham New Street, like an airport check-in lounge. If we have such booking office windows and commercial outlets as well, and if the station is privately owned, it is not difficult to imagine the sort of chaos that could ensue. Under the present system, although one can buy a whole range of goods at Birmingham New Street if one wants to, one cannot travel from England's second city, Birmingham, to England's third city, Manchester, and back after 6 o'clock in the evening. It was Sir Bob Reid mark one who gave the reason for that. He said:

"It is not our role or function to run trains that are desirable. It is our role and function to run trains that are profitable."

Under the brave new world of the privately owned railway, it is difficult to believe that such services will be restored and that once the station is sold to a private operator, the main concern of the operator will be the welfare and safe passage of rail passengers, as against the interests of the commercial outlets that already exist and those that the owner of Birmingham New Street will seek to attract in the future. I hope that the Minister can give me some reassurance on that matter.

I have a couple of other facts that the Minister should bear in mind. Although it is possible to drink Coca-Cola by the gallon at Birmingham New Street, it is possible to get to the toilets only if one pays 10p for a platform ticket. Toilets on stations are not open around the clock, although the outlets often appear to be. Will the new owners be compelled to provide the sort of lavatory facilities that we expect the public sector to provide, albeit at a price, under the present system, or will they be free to make as much money as possible commercially without worrying too much about the welfare or comfort of future passengers?

Mr. McAllion: I was delighted to hear that the Minister recently visited Southend and received a warm reception. I recommend that he revisit Southend next Friday when the civil service trade unions will be demonstrating in opposition to the Government's market-testing proposals. I am sure that he will receive an even warmer reception if he shows up at the Customs and Excise building next Friday.

Sir Teddy Taylor: Does the hon. Gentleman accept that Customs and Excise has won every one of its market tests and that is has won every proposal put out for tender? Therefore, does he accept that, far from Customs and Excise in Southend being a threat, it has shown that it is so efficient that no one else can beat it?

Mr. McAllion: If the hon. Gentleman really believes that, he should go to the meeting next Friday and explain his position to the civil service trade unions in Southend.

At least the Minister was honest when he said that the main purpose of the amendments is to deal with the Government's proposals for railway stations. I shall concentrate mainly on that. The Minister drew a distinction between what he called "large stations" and the remainder of the stations. He said that large stations were those that were on commercially valuable sites close to the centre of large cities. For example, 188,000 passengers pass through Victoria station in London every day, and the station has retail space of some 47,500 sq ft.

It is easy to understand why the private sector would be interested in obtaining a long-term lease for one of the large stations. People will be falling over each other to get their hands on such valuable property. I am sure that the Minister will have no problem in selling large stations to the private sector, but, by his own admission, he said that there are only about two dozen such stations around Britain.

There are 2,500 stations around Britain, so what about the other 2,476? Will the private sector be equally interested in them? The Minister must give us more details about the proposals that are likely to be put in place for the remainder of the stations in Britain, other than the large, valuable and strategically placed stations.

A number of key stations are more middle sized. I am referring to stations that might be described as having a substantial or significant commercial potential—I hope that we can at least agree on what we mean by "substantial" or "significant"—or those that are in important passenger centres. I understand that the private sector might be interested in those stations as well. Indeed, train operators might be interested in taking out franchises for such stations. Will all the remaining 2,476 stations be classed as middle-sized stations, or will some stations fall outside either those two categories?

What will happen to the very small stations which count passengers in hundreds rather than thousands, or possibly even less than hundreds? What will happen to stations that are located not just far from the centres of cities but far from the cities all together? For example, ScotRail has been put out to franchise as a single bid. Will ScotRail be required to take on the franchise for every existing railway

[Mr. McAllion]

station in Scotland? If that is not a requirement, when it takes on the franchises for the services, will it be able to say that it is not interested in taking over some stations because they are too small, require too much investment and do not have enough passengers? Will it be able to say that in its commercial judgment those stations cannot be run properly?

Under the Government's proposals, what will happen to such stations? The Minister has not made that clear and I hope that when he replies to the debate he will mention the small stations that do not have commercial potential. Will train operators be required to take on such stations as part of their franchise? I understand that train operators will lease the station from Railtrack and will operate it for the same duration as the franchise for the train service. I also understand that franchises are to be for seven, 10 or 15 years.

Will an operator who is required to take on a station for, say, seven years make a significant investment in that station when, at the end of seven years, he may lose the franchise for the service and, therefore, for the station? Any train operator who is told that he has to take on 25, 30 or 40 small stations will not be prepared to invest in them if he has a franchise of only seven years.

8.30 pm

Mr. Wilson: I am sure that my hon. Friend will remember that in Committee the Minister said dismissively that it would be ridiculous for the franchising director to lay down when lights were to be switched off at Basildon station—for Basildon, we can read anywhere else in the country. My hon. Friend will remember that, in Committee, the Opposition said that an operator who wanted to get rid of off-peak or inconvenient services could use power over stations as a powerful, manipulative weapon.

Mr. McAllion: My hon. Friend makes a valuable point. If an operator is required by his franchise to run a series of small rural stations, he may close them at 6 o'clock in the evening, thus making it unnecessary to stop at them. Such services could be completely undermined by the franchisee, who would have the power to say that the stations would not be kept open after a certain time at night. Will such matters be negotiated with the operator, will there be give and take, or will the franchiser be able to agree with the franchisee about closing stations because no one is prepared to take them on?

I should like a reassurance that the two stations in my constituency, Dundee Central and Broughty Ferry, will be required to be kept open by whoever takes over the ScotRail franchise or the east coast main line franchise, the only two services which run through there. A train operator who takes on a franchise for any station will also be required to meet agreed and specified responsibilities on routine maintenance at the station. Will a train operator who is running the service to make a profit be interested in taking on the routine maintenance of an isolated small rural station? I do not think so.

Will there be an independent station operator, separate from the train operator and from Railtrack, for large stations? In the consultation document which was issued on this matter, the Minister states:

> "It is vital that there is a single chain of command to deal with emergencies, and this will be a requirement of the station operators safety case. The station operator will have to demonstrate to the Regulator that he has the management capacity to operate a station efficiently and safely. As part of this process he will need to prepare a satisfactory safety case."

Is there not a danger that the people who are best placed to exploit the commercial trading potential of a station—for example, Hanson or Marks and Spencer—may not be the best people to whom to give the responsibility for the safe operation of that station? Conversely, if the franchise is given to those who are best qualified to run the station safely, they may not be the best people to make the most money out of the station. Under the Government's proposals it is not impossible to surmise that Group 4 will bid for the operation of a large railway station, and that would not be regarded by anyone as a welcome development.

The cost of operating a station could be recouped by means of the charges that are placed on operators and others who use the station. If a station operator passes his costs on to the train operators who are using the station, the train operators will simply pass the costs to the customers, the fare-paying travellers. That is why some Conservative Members have spoken about assurances that there will be no implications for fare rises. Such an assurance is essential.

Lords amendment No. 37, which is not in this group, deletes clause 25(4), which states:

> "A franchise agreement may include provisions with respect to the fares to be charged to persons using the franchised services."

Therefore, the Minister is removing from the franchise agreement the ability of the franchiser to say that fares cannot be increased beyond a certain level. That seems to be giving freedom to those who operate the services and those who operate the stations to charge whatever they like to ensure profits, irrespective of what that may mean for people using the stations, their services and the trains that run through them.

Mr. Gunnell: I have some questions about clause 5, which deals with the general duties of the franchising director. Those duties were illuminated by the advice and objectives that were sent by the Secretary of State to the franchising director. That fits fully into the part of the Bill that we seek to amend. Subsection (1)(b) states that any payments to which the paragraph applies will have to achieve those objectives "economically and efficiently". The franchising director will have to assume that the person who receives the franchise will achieve any objectives given to him by the Secretary of State economically and efficiently. Those objectives have been spelt out.

I presume that the term "economically" applies to the person who is willing to bid the most to take on the job; therefore, it is about how much income there will be. From whose perspective will efficiency be considered? The efficiency of the train operator is clearly important, but it is slightly different from the passengers' view of efficiency. The operator will want to get his passengers dealt with as efficiently as possible, but facilities are important to the passenger, as hon. Members have said.

What guidance will be given to those who take on the franchises of stations on what should be provided for the benefit of passengers? Uniformity of service will be valuable. That is not to say that stations should have a

uniform appearance or should apply a uniform total service. However, one would expect a minimum level of service in all stations.

Hon. Members will be concerned about parking arrangements at stations. I am sure that they have noted that our passes for British Rail, which sometimes affect the efficiency of our travel arrangements, expire on 31 March next year. What advice will be given, through the franchising director, on the minimum level of service that passengers can expect? How will the different needs of operators, expecially muliple operators, be reconciled? I am concerned about the definition of "efficiency" when applied to the franchising of stations.

The Minister has sent out a wider consultation note. Bids are to be judged on efficiency and economy. We know a great deal about British Rail's unique position, a matter that we shall discuss shortly. If I have interpreted the Minister's consultation note correctly, it appears that British Rail's actual record will be given great weight. I presume that that record, as described in the general duties and objectives set for the franchising director, would include the sort of information referred to by the hon. Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor).

It would be necessary to know the cost of providing services, adjusted to take account of the new financial and charging arrangements. Can I assume from the paragraph headed "The transfer of risk" that any private sector operator's bid cannot be comparable with that of British Rail because the risk will have been transferred from the public sector to the private sector?

The consultation note contains a fair amount on investment and what, under the general duties of the franchising director, the Secretary of State expects in investment. The Minister is aware that I am especially concerned about investment in rolling stock. Throughout the summer I have raised with him and his Department the question of moving forward the ordering of rolling stock for the newly electrified West Yorkshire line. The cascading process, which hon. Members have referred to and defined, is occurring in West Yorkshire and old rolling stock is to be refurbished at a cost of more than £3 million.

When the franchising director takes up his post, what initiatives can he take to ensure that there is investment and that the ordering of rolling stock is proceeded with? I pay tribute to the Minister for his efforts—with others, with myself, with the company concerned and with the West Yorkshire PTA—to solve the dilemma of how to push forward the current rolling stock order. It is significant that, under the Bill, even the Minister's best efforts—it is clear that he has made considerable effort—could not solve the problem. I want to know how the franchising director, under the general duties laid down for him, can break the impasse in West Yorkshire which is hindering the private sector railway engineering industry in doing its job and thriving.

Dr. Marek: I was recently in the constituency of my hon. Friend the Member for Morley and Leeds, South (Mr. Gunnell) and I noted the number of class 142s at Leeds station. They are most unsatisfactory vehicles and I sympathise with my hon. Friend because his whole region has them in and around it. Other regions have managed to get rid of them.

We must not forget that stations exist to help passengers to go about their business—from where they want to start to where they want to finish. A station does not exist as an end in itself; it is something that helps passengers. It may be true that facilities are needed on stations as people should be able to buy tickets and refreshments and to obtain information. However, there is a line to be drawn between that sort of provision and turning stations into shopping malls, markets and places where developers and others with capital seek to make a return on that capital, irrespective of whether that helps the passenger to go about his business.

8.45 pm

There is a danger that stations could be so built up and clogged up that during busy times passengers could be impeded. Victoria station, although a little better now, was like that. It has always been claustrophobic on the high numbered platforms because there are too many shops. I do not blame British Rail, because it has to get money from wherever it can under the present system, but it has allowed too many shops. When the Bill becomes an Act, as I fear it will, and private interests take over stations, the criterion under which they operate will not be that of seeking to aid the passenger to go about his business.

There is already a nonsensical position under which Regional Railways does not want to pay to stop at one platform but might pay to stop at another platform; InterCity does not want to stop at one platform but will stop at another, provided that it is for no longer than is absolutely necessary. The convenience of the passenger does not come into play when it comes to trains stopping at stations, especially where passengers want to make connections.

Once a station is in private hands, different charges can be made for different trains to stop at different times on different platforms. The market, which the Government think knows best, might know what is best for the market and for those who want to make money out of passengers, but that might not be the same as providing the best possible service with the least inconvenience to passengers. I am worried about what the Government are doing through the clause. I shall wait and see what happens.

There will come a time when there is a different Administration. This incompetent Government are on their last legs because they have introduced such stupid Bills —*[Interruption.]* The Minister for Transport in London laughs, but the public know that they were had in 1992. People will not forget that the Government said, "Vote Conservative on 9 April and the recovery will begin on 10 April." People in my constituency have certainly not forgotten that.

When the Opposition are in government, I hope that we will take as our criterion the convenience of passengers. If any clause in any lease goes against the spirit of that criterion, we should either introduce legislation to take away such leases—without allowing the lessees to make any gain—or impose conditions on those leases to ensure that certain criteria are met; in that way, passengers could conveniently change trains and have convenient access to or exit from stations. If, at a suitable time, the Opposition can lay down those criteria clearly and succinctly, that will give pause for thought to any get-rich-quick cowboy developer or speculator whom the Government have in mind to take over the stations once the Bill becomes an Act.

Mr. Freeman: I shall seek to answer the points that have been raised.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) mentioned a number of issues, which I shall take in sequence. First, he referred to the possibility of double payment by, for example, local authorities or PTE authorities, for the use of stations where they had in the past been responsible for investing and improving the station facilities. I pay tribute to what the PTEs have done. Strathclyde was cited as an example where there has been sustained investment in rolling stock and I hope sincerely that that continues. The Strathclyde PTE——

Mr. Prescott: The Strathclyde authority.

Mr. Freeman: The Strathclyde authority will have my continued support in ensuring that it can place further orders for rolling stock, which I know that it is negotiating.

Mr. Prescott: At least it is not the Minister's money.

Mr. Freeman: It is the taxpayers' money.

I shall now reply to the argument that was made about investment in station assets. We are ensuring that, when the PTEs fund infrastructure improvements from debt they have incurred on their own books, they will not have to pay twice—the financing costs of the debt and also infrastructure charges. We intend that Railtrack will create an obligation on its books and repay the PTE, over a suitable period, sufficient funds to enable those additional charges for the use of assets to be financed by the local authorities. When we discuss the group of amendments about PTEs I will be glad to explain the arrangements that we have in mind.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North also asked where the money is to come from for stations. Railtrack is the freeholder and will have ultimate responsibility for all the assets that it owns. It may be that, for franchises where there is responsibility over five, seven or 10 years for running trains on a group of lines and the franchisee wants responsibility for operating and managing the stations, an agreement will be made with the franchisee as to what improvements, repairs and maintenance will be done at the stations. The responsibility will not fall between the two—in other words, on neither Railtrack nor the franchisee.

The hon. Gentleman asked me about allocation of cost to the shadow franchises. From 1 April 1994, with Railtrack established, the 25 train-operating companies will have a proper apportionment made of the cost of track. We hope to have financial information generated properly for the first seven franchises that we have nominated, from 1 April 1994, in a form which provides a true and accurate record of the cost of operating trains on those lines.

My hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) asked me many questions. I can now be more precise about when financial information will be available about the Fenchurch Street line—the London, Tilbury and Southend line—because we intend that it should be shadow running from 1 April 1994, and that therefore, after the first six months, properly prepared financial information will be available. We shall know what the track charges are; we shall know what the operating costs are because we shall know the size of the payroll; we shall know which rolling stock is being used and accurate information will become available. It certainly will be available in 1995-96 to the potential franchisees of the line, and I would expect that we shall start franchising that line in early 1995.

Therefore, when the hon. Gentleman tables a question asking me what has been the financial record of the line, I shall be able to answer in due corse, although certainly not before the first six months of the line, and, I would expect more accurately at the end of the financial year because when the franchising director lets the franchise that will be public information. In other words, the degree of subsidy required will be publicly known. I hope that that is a clear answer. My right hon. Friend the Member for Southend, West (Mr. Channon) and my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East are interested in the line and we can see whether it is profitable.

I believe and expect that some fares on the London, Tilbury and Southend line will be reduced.

Sir Teddy Taylor: Hear, hear.

Mr. Freeman: I expect that franchisees for certain off-peak services will experiment with lower fares to increase patronage. I travel on the line in both peak and off peak and I know that there is a capacity available on the line. I would expect the private sector to experiment accordingly.

The hon. Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Ms Jackson) asked me about the manning of stations. I know that she is especially concerned about that, and she is right to be so. British Rail, over the years, has felt constrained by the limitation of its resources—inevitably, in the public sector—to reduce the manning at certain stations.

I would expect that, when we franchise rail services, there will be an improvement in the situation of stations which are either unmanned or partially manned, for two reasons. First I would expect the franchisees, and certainly Railtrack, to experiment with introducing greater commercial activity at some stations. Even quite small stations can benefit from shops, or perhaps even restaurant facilities. *[Laughter.]* The hon. Member for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape) laughs. Let me explain why British Rail cannot do that at the present time.

The hon. Gentleman has not had the experience of setting BR's external financing limit. That is broken down by line of route. The managers have a sum to spend—not a penny more, not a penny less. Many managers find it difficult to experiment, for example, with rent-free accommodation in order to attract the private sector, in what has been a depressed property market, to come on to the stations to develop them. I expect that, as one of the advantages of privatisation, the private sector, without those constraints, will experiment to create more activity at the stations. More activity means greater safety, and greater safety means more passengers.

Mr. Wilson: I am interested in the scenario which the Minister outlines, as it is imaginative and it may happen somewhere. His idea is that restaurants will be opened at stations which are currently unmanned in order to attract more people on to the stations while trains which are under-used run through them. It may happen, but I am sure that the Minister will also want to consider the scenario that I mentioned to my hon. Friend the Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion) and which the Minister brought into the debate in Committee.

He made it quite clear that it would not be the Minister's or the franchise director's job to lay down the times when

there would have to be lights on stations, far less a range of restaurants available to the public on a rent-free basis. Will the Minister consider that other scenario, and will he confirm that it will be at the discretion of the operator, not just whether there are restaurants on the stations where now there are none, but whether there are lights on in the stations and whether the operator of the stations and the route will be allowed to run down the service to get rid of off-peak services?

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Gentleman proceeds from the assumption that the private sector is there to cream off the profits, make the service deteriorate, increase fares substantially and cut investment. I do not proceed on that basis. All the evidence of privatisations during the past 14 years flies in the face of his assertion. I do not expect the private sector to do anything other than encourage more passengers to use railway trains. That will perhaps answer the hon. Member for Morley and Leeds, South (Mr. Gunnell). The rooted hostility of the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North towards the private sector is irrational. I expect it to want more patronage, not less.

I was in the middle of trying to answer the hon. Member for Hampstead and Highgate. In certain cases, the private sector will want to experiment to encourage patronage, by hiring additional staff to work on platforms or on trains. I believe that Network SouthEast has lost a share of the market—although I do not blame it—because it has had to operate within cash limits under Labour and Conservative Governments, as I have described. There is evidence, however, that more people would travel by train if they felt that they were more secure—especially women late at night. I believe that such investment by the private sector would be repaid.

The hon. Member for Southampton, Itchen (Mr. Denham) asked about British Rail Maintenance Ltd. at Eastleigh. There has been a remarkable change in the technology involved in building trains. Whatever happens —whether British Rail is privatised or not—we must acknowledge that that change will reduce the amount of work available for heavy maintenance depots. We must face the fact that considerable surplus capacity is likely in that section of the industry. It is important that we do not limit the opportunities open to the workers at Eastleigh or the amount of business that they can bid for.

In Committee, I considered whether it was sensible to assign each BRML depot to one of the rolling stock leasing companies. I have come to the firm conclusion—one that I think is shared by those who work at Eastleigh—that that would be wrong, because one would be limiting its work.

Mr. Denham *rose*——

Mr. Freeman: I shall give way to the hon. Gentleman on that subject, but perhaps I may finish my argument first. Eastleigh would then be limited to perhaps only one third of the total rolling stock maintenance market. The more efficient the plant, the more business it can obtain, and if Eastleigh is right that it is one of the most efficient plants, as I believe it is, it should wish to bid for work from all the rolling stock companies.

The present arrangements are not satisfactory, because work is essentially assigned by British Rail. Eastleigh should have the opportunity to compete across the board. As the hon. Member for Itchen said, it is true that we plan to establish contracts between British Rail and Eastleigh —and probably the rolling stock leasing companies, although not necessarily—to guarantee a work load for some years. I cannot be specific about how much and for how many years. Those contracts would ensure the viability of the business before it passes into the private sector.

Mr. Denham: Although it is perhaps a contradiction of what the Minister has just said, does he accept that last week the council and the trade unions representing workers from BRML asked that it be allocated to a leasing company? The evidence therefore suggests that BRML workers favour that option. Does the Minister also accept that 90 per cent. of its work derives from Network SouthEast rolling stock, largely because of the third rail electrification system, which means that it has a specific type of rolling stock and therefore of maintenance? The allocation of BRML to the leasing company most likely to provide such rolling stock would be the best way to secure its future.

9 pm

Mr. Freeman: We are dealing with the livelihoods of many people, and I am happy to keep an open mind on the final structure. I do not want to do anything that would needlessly put anyone's jobs in jeopardy. I have already given a commitment to my hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Milligan)—I am happy to extend it to the hon. Gentleman—that I shall stay in close touch so that we do not needlessly complicate what is already a difficult situation due to the over-capacity in the industry. I hope that the hon. Gentleman will take those words in the spirit in which they are offered.

My hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) asked me three questions. I thank him for his kind comments. I know of his great commitment, both in his constituency and throughout the south-east, to ensuring that we have a good railway system, and that services improve rather than deteriorate. First, he asked who would have responsibility for stations and for their maintenance, development and so forth. He asked whether it would be the British Rail Property Board or some other body.

Railtrack, as the freeholder, will be responsible for all stations and will decide when it is appropriate to delegate any financial responsibility to the franchisees, who will be responsible for maintenance and development for a relatively short period in the life of a station—five, seven or 10 years. I am already impressed with Railtrack's plans. A competent management is being put in place, and I look forward to Railtrack pursuing a positive policy to improve stations. I can assure my hon. Friend that the Secretary of State for Transport and I will watch carefully to see that that policy is applied.

I assure my hon. Friend, too, that the closure policy, which my hon. Friend the Minister for Transport in London will deal with shortly, will cover stations. Neither Railtrack nor a franchisee will be able to close a station precipitously. We set out at length our policy on that aspect. That process will take up to 12 months.

As to towns and villages having railway stations which might not be covered by listed building consents, I give my hon. Friend the assurance that planning law will continue to apply to any change of use away from the main business of the statutory undertaking—that is, running a railway station—to some other purpose, such as the running of a

[Mr. Freeman]

supermarket. Listed building consent already applies and will continue to do so. We want to maintain our excellent railway stations, particularly those in Sussex.

The hon. Member for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape) asked about disposing of assets for commercial value. That will be the responsibility of Railtrack as the freeholder. As to Birmingham New Street, I see nothing wrong in having a single operator of that station being responsible for the station's commercial redevelopment and improvement, with several different franchisees operating through it. Birmingham New Street is already showing its age and I see no objection to a sole operator with many different train operators providing services.

The hon. Member for Leeds, East (Mr. Mudie) asked what is meant by the transfer of risk in the draft document which sets out the franchising director's objectives. It means that when the franchising director considers bids from the public and private sector, he will take into account that a public sector bid does not involve the transfer of risk. If the public sector gets its bid wrong and more subsidy is required, the taxpayer has to pay, so there may be some premium, advantage or benefit attached to a private sector bid which takes the risks.

I was asked about the role of the franchising director in West Yorkshire passenger transport executive rolling stock. He will be able to designate assets so that they roll over from one franchise to another. They will continue in use for the full length of a lease. The director will also be able to give assurances about the operation of the railway administration orders. I look forward to making further progress on the rolling stock lease. I am determined that it will come to fruition.

Mr. Andrew Welsh (Angus, East): The Minister dwelt on the commercial prospects for larger stations; but will he comment on the rule for smaller stations? How will his plans affect them? Will he answer the questions put by the hon. Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion)? What future does the Minister see for smaller, rural stations?

Mr. Freeman: I apologise for not dealing with that point, which was also raised, by implication, by the hon. Member for Wrexham (Dr. Marek). Smaller stations will almost invariably be run by the franchisees and will remain under the ownership of Railtrack, the freeholder. It will not be within the gift of the franchisee operating the train services or Railtrack to close any particular station. We have an elaborate, clear and comprehensive closure procedure which involves not only the consultative committees but the regulator and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport.

Mr. McAllion: The Minister said that smaller stations "will almost invariably be run by the franchisees". That suggests that ScotRail, for example, will be required to take on all the small rural stations in Scotland and continue to run them as part of the franchise that it assumes on 1 April. Will the Minister confirm that that is the case?

Mr. Freeman: I think that by implication that is the case, for the simple reason that when we come to franchise ScotRail, it will be franchised on the basis of all the rail services running in Scotland. By definition, that will involve the active use of all the stations, small and large, at which rail services call. Therefore, the practical implication is yes. I commend the amendment to the House.

Amendment agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 5, in page 6, line 5, at end insert ("or

((ii) the operation of additional railway assets under or by virtue of any franchise agreement or any provision of sections 26 and 32 to 42 below;").

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Freeman.]*

Question put:—

The House divided: Ayes 319, Noes 231.

Division No. 379] **[9.09 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*

Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Riffkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'fld)*
Wolfson, Mark
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Timothy Wood and
Mr. Robert G. Hughes.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S.O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*

Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
McCrea, Rev William
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McGrady, Eddie
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Michael, Alun
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Is'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Tyler, Paul
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Gordon McMaster and Mr. Alan Meale.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 6, in page 6, line 20, after ("35") insert

("Proposals to close passenger railway facilities operated on behalf of the Franchising Director")

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris): I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): With this, we will take Lords amendments Nos. 70, 71 to 123, 325, 326 and 453.

Mr. Norris: The amendments build on the existing closure procedures. Those procedures will apply, as at present, to the complete cessation of passenger services to a station or on a line. Consumer committees will continue to report on any hardship arising from a proposed closure and may, of course, hold public hearings. Some changes will be made to the procedures, mainly to reflect the new structure of the railways. The operational control of certain facilities, networks, stations and light maintenance depots may not in future rest with train operators, so the closure procedures will also need to apply to proposals to terminate the use of such facilities. Decisions on closures will be for the regulator, but there will be a right of appeal to the Secretary of State. There will also be a simplified procedure for minor infrastructure closures.

The amendments would substantially improve the closure provisions of the Bill. The majority are drafting, technical and consequential amendments, but one or two are of substance. I emphasise that most of the proposals were tabled by Opposition Peers, or introduced by the Government in response to Opposition concerns. Let me detail the most significant of them.

Amendment No. 108 is the most important in the group. It removes the 26-week limit on any further period that the Secretary of State may allow the regulator to make his decision. We have repeatedly said that the restructuring of railways does not lead to more closures but, inevitably —as has always been known on the railways—there will be a few over time as railways adjust to changing demand, just as there will be additions to the network for the same reason. Most of the closures will not be particularly important but it is conceivable that there may be controversial closures and the closure procedures have to cater for that eventuality, too.

The Bill as drafted permits the regulator a maximum of one year in which to make his decision. It is acceptable to argue that, in an especially controversial case, that limit might be tested severely. Amendment No. 108 will remedy that potential difficulty.

Amendments Nos. 107, 112 and 325 would enable the rail users consultative committees to publish their reports to the regulator; would ensure that the RUCCs were informed of the designation by the franchising director of those services that were experimental; and would permit the Secretary of State to place conditions on consents to closure given under the alternative closure procedures set out in schedule 4. All those amendments followed representations made on behalf of the Central Transport Consultative Committee, and I am sure that hon. Members on both sides of the House will agree that they would improve the Bill.

Amendment No. 453 would make transitional provision for closure proposals—that is, provision for closure proposals which might be in the pipeline when the new procedures replace the old. It provides that such a proposal should be processed under the old procedure. It also ensures that the channel tunnel services are included in the consumer committees' responsibilities.

Amendments Nos. 97 and 104 introduce the new clauses that are needed to cover a particular circumstance in which a closure might be proposed that was not covered by the Bill as amended in this House. If consent to close a network or a facility such as a maintenance depot is refused, the franchising director must secure its continued operation, and is likely to do so by engaging someone to do it on his behalf. The new clauses will simply enable him to repropose closure of those networks or facilities if in later years he wishes to do so.

Other amendments in the group include a recasting of clause 33, which deals with proposals to close franchise services, so as to align it with the new clause introduced by amendment No. 97—proposals to close networks operated on behalf of the franchising director—and amendments to ensure that the removal of track is not treated as a closure provided that at least a single track remains. That last amendment carries forward the position under the existing closure procedures and ensures that routine track alterations can take place without triggering any part of the new closure procedures.

All the amendments are fairly technical and I again emphasise that the majority were either introduced by Opposition Peers or by the Government in response to demands from groups such as the user committees or Opposition Members.

Lords amendment No. 123 adds a new clause to the Bill which deals with exclusion of liability for breach of statutory duty. The new clause is exactly the same as the provision in section 3(4) of the Transport Act 1962 which provides that nothing that is contained in sections 3(1) or 3(2), which places a duty on BR to provide railway services in Great Britain, shall impose

"any form of duty or liability enforceable by proceedings before any court to which the Board would not otherwise be subject."

In broad terms, the duties of the franchising director in respect of securing continuity of service are not to give rise to any liability for breach of statutory duty. That fairly straightforward principle is in the 1962 Act and is simply replicated in this legislation. However, to avoid doubt, that does not mean that we are seeking to exclude any proceedings for judicial review in respect of those duties of the franchising director.

9.30 pm

Similarly, any obligation on an operator not to discontinue services or the operation of a network, station or light maintenance depot without giving due notice, is not to be enforceable through proceedings for a breach of statutory duty. Those obligations will be enforceable by the regulator who will use his enforcement powers in the Bill.

It is also important to recognise that, in moving that the House doth agree with Lords amendment No. 123 and the new clause to ensure that nothing contained in sections 3(1) and 3(2) of the Transport Act 1962 places a duty on the franchising director analogous with the duties on the British Railways Board under the 1962 Act, we are not excluding liability of operators for breaches of contract or negligence. All those powers remain in place should it be appropriate for them to be used.

As I said earlier, the other amendments in the group are largely technical. It is reasonable to say that they all improve the Bill by common agreement, having received the support of Opposition Members when moved, and I trust that the House will agree to them.

Mr. Bayley: The Opposition welcome Lords amendment No. 108, which deletes the 26-week cut-off period for extensions of consultation in respect of closures. However, unlike the Minister and Conservative Members, we fear that it will have to be invoked because the privatisation is not just a sale of the railways, it is likely to be a closing down sale of the railways.

It is disingenuous of the Minister to say that the closure procedures set out in the Lords amendments simply build on the existing procedure. It is also misleading to say that the Government are introducing a simplified procedure for dealing with minor closures. The minor closure procedure, which we have not had before, reduces the public's right to object if they are to be disadvantaged by a closure. In the past, the transport users consultative committees decided whether a closure was so minor that they had no comment to make. In future, the committees will not have that choice and the regulator will make that decision.

Nothing illustrates better the way in which the Government have approached privatisation, by making it up as they go along, than the way in which they have dealt with the closure procedures. We had a full day's debate on the matter in Standing Committee and ended up with 17 pages of legislation on the issue in the Bill that we sent to another place. A further 14 pages of legislation have come back. They are changes which were not thought of by the Government in Committee. They have arisen subsequently.

It all seemed so easy in the White Paper. The closure provisions were summed up in two very short paragraphs. Paragraph 71 stated:

"There is no reason to believe that the Government's proposals will lead to closures of services. But if in future, as a result of change in demand, the Franchising Authority decided that a service was no longer socially necessary and there was no case for continuing that service then the same statutory closure procedures would apply as now. In such cases the final decision about whether a service should be retained or withdrawn will continue to be taken by the Secretary of State."

Sadly, those commitments were not to be. First, the commitment to the social railway has been deleted—it does not appear in the Bill. Secondly, the commitment to provide the same statutory closure procedures as we had previously does not appear. We have tighter time limits and a new concept of a "minor closure". There used to be a requirement to advertise in two local newspapers. That is now changed to one local newspaper, although in another place an amendment was passed that there had to be two advertisements in one newspaper.

If, as seems likely with privatisation, in respect of services from Seamer to Bridlington to Beverley to Hull, if that east coast line were to close, where would one advertise? Would it be the *Scarborough Evening News*, the *Hull Daily Mail* or the Bridlington local newspaper? It is not good enough to limit it to one newspaper.

In the White Paper, we were promised that the decision on the closure would be made by the Secretary of State, as now. In fact, it is not the Secretary of State but the regulator who will make the decision. In some cases, there is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State, but what we were promised in the White Paper is not in the Bill.

The threat of closure is real. Regional Railways has published a map on which it highlights a wide range of lines that are threatened with closure. Apart from the Scarborough to Hull service, there is the Middlesbrough to Saltburn service, the Middlesbrough to Whitby service, the Grimsby to Cleethorpes service, and the Sheffield to Barnetby service. Apart from Yorkshire, the Carlisle to Barrow service is marked in red on the map as threatened with closure. Other services include Barrow to Silverdale, Aberystwyth in Wales to Shrewsbury, Llanelli to Craven Arms and so on throughout the country, including Lowestoft to Ipswich, and, in the south-west, the Exeter to Barnstaple and the Par to Newquay services. All those services are highlighted as at risk.

Those lines do not make a profit, they provide a public service, and their future depends on whether the franchising director's budget, after other calls on it to make

[Mr. Bayley]

main franchise services profitable for private operators, will contain enough money to maintain services. British Rail currently has 10,600 miles of passenger track. On Second Reading, the Secretary of State said that, after privatisation, the extent of the network would remain nearly the same as it is now. In Committee, the Minister said that there would not be a significant reduction in the franchised services compared with the May 1994 pre-privatisation timetable.

I should like the Minister to reiterate the commitment that the basis of services post-privatisation—the basis of the franchising agreement—will be the same as the services set out in the May 1994 timetable. I should like him also to comment on use of the phrase "substantially the same as in the timetable". Time and again, we have asked for a definition of what "substantially" means in that context, but we have never received one. Does it mean that 90 per cent., 95 per cent. or 99 per cent. of services will be protected?

What about the quality of service that is provided to the travelling public? The service can decline quite substantially without the closure procedures being introduced. I notice that in amendment No. 90, which the Minister described as a small technical tidying-up matter, there is a specific new provision that, if a line is changed from dual-track working to single-track working, it will no longer count as a closure at all. So the service can be radically reduced and undermined in a major way, which, in the past, would have resulted in a full and proper closure procedure, and, with the appointment of a regulator, even the Secretary of State can now get off the hook.

The commitments that we were offered in bland and breezy terms in two paragraphs of the White Paper have not been met in the relevant 17 pages of the Bill that went to the Lords or in the further 14 pages of amendments that have come back to us. What does the Minister say about the failure to honour the commitments contained in the White Paper?

Mr. Norris: It always strikes me as quite extraordinary that one of the more incredible flights of fancy indulged in by Opposition Members when considering this Bill is that they assume that somehow the pattern of railway services in Britain has remained immutable, unchanged and as written on tablets of stone for the past 45 years. If that had been the case, it would be worrying if the Government proposed anything to suggest that in the future those tablets of stone might be shattered.

The hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley) is obsessed with that notion. He meanders constantly around this complex Hornby OO service—an immutable service which has not altered since time began—and he believes that the slightest movement on it will upset terrestrial equilibrium. Of course, that is and always has been nonsense.

The hon. Gentleman purports to know something about railways, but I have not been able to judge whether he does know anything in the 150 hours of debate that we have had, and I remain to be convinced. The hon. Gentleman should know that the pattern of railway services has altered in every year that the railways have been in operation.

Mr. Alex Carlile (Montgomery): Mostly for the worse.

Mr. Norris: That is a matter for the hon. and learned Gentleman and others to judge. Railway services have altered under Governments of both complexions—bits have been added to and removed from railway services —which is exactly what one would expect to happen as railway patterns reflect changes in demand.

Mr. Carlile: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Norris: If I may finish the sentence, the hon. and learned Gentleman will be welcome to enliven our proceedings, as he always does.

Let us take the extraordinary proposition that what might happen in the future is exactly what has happened in every year that the railways have existed. There will, no doubt, be minor closures and minor openings. The local press will make more of the closures than of the openings, but that is in the nature of things. We want a procedure to deal with the closures, to ensure that whenever a closure is proposed it is exhaustively debated, and all the relevant information about a service's usefulness to the local community is taken into account.

The Bill not only takes forward the current provisions for closure, but makes them wider and more comprehensive. It gives the user committees more powers in relation to the publication of their reports, the disclosure of the information that they have and the observations that they can make on the closures. It is illogical and absurd to argue that because the Bill contains provisions for closures it breaches a new dyke in railway administration.

Mr. Carlile: Of course one cannot exclude the possibility of closures from time to time—that is an ordinary incident in the commercial life of a nationalised or private industry—but does the Minister not agree that, after the railways have been privatised, inevitably it will be the rural lines that are forced into closure? A privatised regime, by its own hypothesis, will be opposed to the continuation of railways in areas where there are not many customers. Should not the Government address the issue of the social need for railways and their affect on rural areas, some of which have important towns, such as Aberystwyth, on their periphery?

Mr. Norris: I have a great deal of respect for the hon. and learned Gentleman, but I do not honestly believe that any sensible reading of the Bill could lead one to conclude that the privatisation of services proposed in it has any relevance to decisions on the closure of rural or busy lines.

My reasoning is straightforward. I am sure that the hon. and learned Gentleman would agree that, in the past 40 years, there have probably been more line closures than openings, but I remind him that those took place in a nationalised industry.

9.45 pm

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Lancaster): When my right hon. Friend the Minister for Public Transport was good enough to visit Lancaster, he made it quite clear that socially necessary lines and rural ones would receive a subsidy. He has since confirmed that assurance in writing to me. That means that it is highly probable that the west coast main line will be eligible to receive a subsidy. That line covers many rural areas.

Mr. Norris: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for making that point, because her remarks underline the heart of the Bill. I understand that it is in the political interests of

Opposition Members not to understand that point or to take it on board, because the minute they do so three quarters of the debate in which they have been engaged for the past months will explode.

The hypothesis is straightforward. The franchising director sets out a pattern of services that he requires the franchisee to undertake. In answer to the hon. Member for York, the timetable on which that pattern is based will, as has frequently been stated, be that operating at the time the franchise is offered. It may be the 1994 timetable or one for a later date. The important thing is that it will offer a replication of the current services.

We have used the word "substantially" according to its straightforward English meaning. In other words, the new service will be the same in every material respect as that currently on offer. That is why the hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. Carlile) should understand that the issue of the vulnerability of rural lines is not affected by the Bill. On the contrary—there will now be an open incentive to a private operator, who has already contracted with the franchising director to provide a range of relevant services, including services to some rural stations, to think about how to maximise his or her profits. The operator will wish to do that by looking at services which are currently under-used to see what can be done to make them more attractive, thus attracting extra revenue to those lines.

The franchise operator is already contracted with the franchising director, and in so doing has presumably built in the basic rate of return that would be required by his shareholders. Any improvement in the take-up of services will be to the benefit of the franchising operator. The hon. and learned Member for Montgomery would agree, of course, that that will also benefit passengers.

I must make it clear that I do not accept the argument put forward by the hon. Member for York. The new regime is a substantial improvement on the one which currently operates. It will not detract in any way from the ability of local communities to object to the closure of lines. On the contrary, it replicates and expands the existing system. On that basis, I have no hesitation in commending the amendment to the House.

Lords amendment agreed to.

Clause 7

EXEMPTIONS FROM SECTION 6.

Lords amendment: No. 7, in

Page 8, line 1, leave out subsection (6) and insert—

("(6) If any condition (the "broken condition") of a licence exemption is not complied with—

(a) the Secretary of State, in the case of a licence exemption under subsection (1) above, or

(b) the Regulator, in the case of a licence exemption under subsection (3) above,

may give to any relevant person a direction declaring that the licence exemption is revoked, so far as relating to that person, to such extent and as from such date as may be specified in the direction.

(6A) For the purposes of subsection (6) above—

"condition", in relation to a licence exemption, means any condition subject to compliance with which the licence exemption was granted;

"relevant person", in the case of any licence exemption, means a person who has the benefit of the licence exemption and who—

(a) is a person who failed to comply with the broken condition or with respect to whom the broken condition is not complied with; or

(b) is the operator of any of the railway assets in relation to which the broken condition is not complied with.")

Mr. Freeman: I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Madam Speaker: With this we may take Lords amendments Nos. 8 to 18, 24, 178 to 181 and 187.

Mr. Freeman: There are two aspects of this group of amendments that I shall draw to the attention of the House. First, the principle amendments Nos. 7 and 24 deal with the powers of the Secretary of State or the regulator to revoke licence exemptions when breaches occur. The Bill needed improvement to make it plain that when an undertaking that has been given and formally recognised in the licence is breached, for example, the failure to honour a commitment on through ticketing, which is to be a condition of a licence agreement and a most important network benefit, then the regulator—in certain cases the Secretary of State will grant the licence—has the power to revoke the licence exemption where an exemption has been granted.

The more important reason for amendments Nos. 8 and 16 is to do with where there is a particular group of railway lines that involves both licensed and exempt activities. We realise that there may well be examples of that and I shall cite one in a moment: the Heathrow Express, which is most important. There may well be examples on the network where the running of trains is subject to the licensing regime because the railway service is plying for hire, carrying passengers on the track infrastructure and, also, where the same railway service runs are on exempt—privately owned—track. That may well also be the case for preserved railways.

The Heathrow Express example is the best that I can cite at the present time. The Heathrow Express service has reached the stage where an agreement has been concluded and we hope that construction will start shortly. The Heathrow Express is a spur from the western mainline connecting new stations at Heathrow central and terminal four to Paddington. The House will know that that service will run on licensed main track on the Great Western railway for most of its journey. It is a joint venture between the British Airports Authority and British Rail on 70-30 equity terms, with the majority coming from BAA in the private sector. Heads of agreement were agreed in March and the detailed agreement has now been concluded. Four trains per hour will run during the day on the 16-minute journey between Paddington and Heathrow central. Fares are to be set commercially by the joint venture and the level of fares presently contemplated are £9 single and £14 return. Contracts are now being tendered and let and main contruction will be under way soon. Services are expected to commence by the end of 1997. Approximately £300 million including the cost of the rolling stock will be invested.

The group of amendments, especially Nos. 8 and 16, deals with where it is expedient for public policy purposes not to control the fares on the whole service between Paddington and Heathrow. It is a non-stop service, partly running over track that would normally carry only licensed

[Mr. Freeman]

services and partly over a private spur. We do not think that it is sensible in any way to interfere or regulate fares that will be and should be set commercially.

The amendments also provide for the transfer of the licences, including the Heathrow Express licence, but for that to occur there needs to be the consent of the Secretary of State or the regulator. At some stage in the future, that joint venture or others that benefit from the group of amendments may need to be sold or transferred, and there is a mechanism for that. Access to Heathrow by crossrail at some stage in the future will be possible, but the commercial agreement of the partners will clearly be needed for the joint venture.

Undoubtedly, the licence conditions—the Lords amendments clarify the position—can apply, for example, to the provisions for through ticketing or to other common operating procedures. There has been some anxiety that some of the arrangements for common operation between two franchisee companies might fall foul of either the licensing conditions or other legislation. We have made it plain in the Lords amendments that such arrangements are appropriate and can be included in the licence conditions.

I should be glad to answer detailed questions on any of the other Lords amendments in the group. I commend the amendments to the House.

Question put and agreed to.

Subsequent Lords amendments agreed to.

Clause 15

FACILITY OWNERS TO PERMIT USE OF RAILWAY FACILITIES BY OTHER PERSONS

Lords amendment: No. 19, to leave out clause 15 and insert the following new clause—*Access agreements: directions requiring facility owners to enter into contracts for the use of their railway facilities*—

(" .—(1) The Regulator may, on the application of any person, give directions to a facility owner requiring him to enter into an access contract with the applicant for the purpose specified in subsection (2) below; but no such directions shall be given if and to the extent that—

(a) the facility owner's railway facility is, by virtue of section 16 below, an exempt facility;

(b) performance of the access contract, if entered into, would necessarily involve the facility owner in being in breach of an access agreement or an international railway access contract; or

(c) as a result of an obligation or duty owed by the facility owner which arose before the coming into force of this section, the consent of some other person is required by the facility owner before he may enter into the access contract.

(2) The purpose for which directions may be given is that of enabling the beneficiary to obtain (whether for himself alone or for himself and, so far as may be applicable, associates of his)—

(a) from a facility owner whose railway facility is track, permission to use that track for the purpose of the operation of trains on that track by the beneficiary;

(b) from a facility owner whose railway facility is a station permission to use that station for or in connection with the operation of trains by the beneficiary;

(c) from a facility owner whose railway facility is a light maintenance depot, permission to use that light maintenance depot for the purpose of obtaining light maintenance services for or in connection with the operation of trains by the beneficiary, whether the facility owner is to provide those services himself or to secure their provision by another;

(d) from any facility owner, permission to use the facility owner's railway facility for the purpose of stabling, or otherwise temporarily holding, rolling stock in connection with the operation of trains on any track by the beneficiary; or

(e) from any facility owner, permission to use the facility owner's railway facility for or in connection with the operation of a network, station or light maintenance depot by the beneficiary;

but this subsection is subject to the limitations imposed by subsection (3) below.

(3) In subsection (2) above—

(a) paragraph (a) does not extend to obtaining permission to use track for the purpose of providing network services on that track;

(b) paragraph (b) does not extend to obtaining permission to use a station for the purpose of operating that station;

(c) paragraph (c) does not extend to obtaining permission to use a light maintenance depot for the purpose of enabling the beneficiary to carry out light maintenance;

(d) if and to the extent that the railway facility mentioned in paragraph (e) is track, that paragraph does not extend to obtaining permission to use that track for the purpose —

(i) of providing network services on that track, or

(ii) of operating any network in which that track is comprised,

except where the purpose for which directions are sought is to enable the beneficiary to operate on behalf of the Franchising Director a network in which the track in question is comprised;

(e) if and to the extent that the railway facility mentioned in that paragraph is a station, that paragraph does not extend to obtaining permission to use that station for the purpose—

(i) of providing station services at that station, or

(ii) of operating that station,

except where the purpose for which directions are sought is to enable the beneficiary to operate the station on behalf of the Franchising Director;

(f) if and to the extent that the railway facility mentioned in that paragraph is a light maintenance depot, that paragraph does not extend to obtaining permission to use that light maintenance depot for the purpose—

(i) of carrying out light maintenance at that light maintenance depot, or

(ii) of operating that light maintenance depot,

except where the purpose for which directions are sought is to enable the beneficiary to operate the light maintenance depot on behalf of the Franchising Director.

(4) Any reference in this section to a person operating a network, station or light maintenance depot "on behalf of the Franchising Director" is a reference to his operating the network, station or light maintenance depot in pursuance of any agreement or other arrangements made by the Franchising Director for the purpose of performing a duty imposed upon him, or exercising a power conferred upon him, under or by virtue of this Part to secure the operation of that network, station or light maintenance depot.

(5) Nothing in this section authorises the Regulator to give directions to any person requiring him to grant a lease of the whole or any part of a railway facility.

(6) In this Part—

"access contract" means—

(a) a contract under which—

(i) a person (whether or not the applicant), and

(ii) so far as may be appropriate, any associate of that person,

obtains permission from a facility owner to use the facility owner's railway facility; or

(b) a contract conferring an option, whether exercisable by the applicant or some other person, to require a facility owner to secure that—

(i) a person (whether or not the applicant or that other), and

(ii) so far as may be appropriate, any associate of that person,

obtains permission from the facility owner to use his railway facility;

and any reference to an "access option" is a reference to an option falling within paragraph (b) above;

"facility owner" means any person—

(a) who has an estate or interest in, or right over, a railway facility; and

(b) whose permission to use that railway facility is needed by another before that other may use it;

and any reference to a facility owner's railway facility is a reference to the railway facility by reference to which he is a facility owner.

(7) In this section—

"the applicant" means the person making the application for directions;

"associate", in relation to any person, includes—

(a) any servant, agent or independent contractor of his;

(b) any passenger of his;

(c) any person engaged in the provision of goods or services to or for him; and

(d) any other person who deals or has business with him;

"the beneficiary" means the person mentioned in paragraph (a)(i) or, as the case may be, paragraph (b)(i) of the definition of "access contract" in subsection (6) above, according to the description of access contract in question;

"directions" means directions under this section;

"the Directive" means the Directive of the Council of the European Communities dated 29th July 1991 on the development of the Community's railways;

"implementing regulation" means a provision contained in subordinate legislation made for the purpose of implementing the Directive;

"international railway access contract" means an access contract entered into as a result of—

(a) an application made under an implementing regulation by an international grouping to an infrastructure manager for access and transit rights, or for transit rights, for the provision of international services between the member States where the undertakings constituting the international grouping are established; or

(b) an application made under an implementing regulation by a railway undertaking established, or to be established, in a member State other than the United Kingdom to an infrastructure manager for the grant of access for the purpose of the operation of international combined transport goods services;

and expressions used in paragraph (a) or (b) above and in the Directive have the same meaning in that paragraph as they have in the Directive;

"lease" includes an underlease or sublease and an agreement for a lease, underlease or sublease.

(8) Any reference in this section to obtaining permission to use a railway facility includes—

(a) a reference to obtaining, in connection with any such permission, power to obtain the provision of ancillary services relating to that railway facility, whether the facility owner in question is to provide those services himself or to secure their provision by another; and

(b) a reference to obtaining permission—

(i) to enter upon the facility land, with or without vehicles,

(ii) to bring things on to that land and keep them there,

(iii) to carry out works on that land, and

(iv) to use and maintain any things kept, or buildings or other works constructed, on that land (whether by the beneficiary or another) or any amenities situated on that land,

"facility land" meaning in this paragraph the land which constitutes the railway facility in question;

and, in subsection (2)(c) above, the reference to obtaining permission to use a light maintenance depot includes a reference to obtaining power to obtain light maintenance services at that light maintenance depot, whether the facility owner is to provide those services himself or to secure their provision by another.

(9) Any reference in this section to a railway facility includes a reference to a part of a railway facility.

(10) Schedule *(Access agreements: applications for access contracts)* to this Act shall have effect with respect to applications for directions.

(11) Any sums required for the making by the Franchising Director of payments in respect of an access contract entered into pursuant to directions under this section shall, if the access contract is one—

(a) in relation to which the Franchising Director is the person who made the application under this section, or

(b) under which an access option is exercisable by the Franchising Director,

be paid by the Secretary of State out of money provided by Parliament.")

Mr. Norris: Moved formally.

Mr. Freeman: My hon. Friend seeks to relegate me, Madam Speaker.

I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Madam Speaker: With this we may take Lords amendments Nos. 20 to 23, 25 to 30, 132, 182 to 186, 301 and 324.

Mr. Freeman: The amendments concern access and they are extensive. They deal with three particular issues which I am glad to explain to the House. Access and access agreements are vital to the efficient running of the privatised railway. You will be aware, Madam Speaker, that an access agreement has to be entered into by a railway operating company with Railtrack, which has the duty to ensure that it does not discriminate between train operating companies. The regulator has the power of regulations and under the Bill, he has the duty to ensure fair competition.

We envisage that the access agreement that will be entered into by the train operating companies—the passenger train companies, the franchisees—and Railtrack will run coterminously with the franchise agreement which governs the degrees of subsidy that the franchising director will pay to the train operating company. The two agreements run back to back. It is most important, under our provisions for open access to the railway, that, when it is appropriate, the Secretary of State, who has powers to give directions and guidance, can ensure that, in his dealings with the regulator, the regulator is left in no doubt about the need to moderate competition for the letting of the first franchises.

The amendments, which are largely technical, do three things. First, they make it clear that rights of access do not extend to the actual operation of the track or the stations. That is reserved, obviously, to Railtrack as the freeholder and to station lessees as those responsible for the management and operation of individual stations.

Secondly, the amendments deal with the right of access granted by the regulator generally and they ensure that rights of access do not override other rights in certain cases. Rights may already exist, for example, to run railway trains or freight trains. The regulator cannot arbitrarily grant access to new operators, because that would conflict with existing contracts and agreements. Under the provisions for granting access internationally to railway trains, especially passenger services, those agreements will be made formally under the provisions that apply to international access under the EC directive.

It is envisaged that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will appoint the regulator responsible for

[Mr. Freeman]

regulating the domestic traffic as the international regulator. I think that that is his present intention. That is my right hon. Friend's function at the moment.

The amendments deal with access to railway facilities. The access provisions of the Bill as it left the Commons were deficient in a number of detailed but important respects. First, access rights were not sufficiently closely defined. It is important, therefore, to pin down exactly the rights that applicants should have and the types of contract that need to be regulated. For example, it is not our intention that management contracts relating to the operation of a station, or a lease of a light maintenance depot, should count as an access contract.

Secondly, the effect of the grant of access rights on obligations, which facility owners may owe to others, was not entirely clear. Finally, the procedures governing applications were, on reflection, too cumbersome. To ensure——

Debate adjourned.—*[Mr. Andrew Mitchell.]*

Debate to be resumed tomorrow.

Business of the House

10 pm

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I should like to make a short business statement.

The business for tomorrow will now be a timetable motion on the Railways Bill followed by conclusion of consideration of Lords amendments to the Railways Bill.

Mrs. Margaret Beckett (Derby, South): That is a constitutional outrage. The House was told by the Leader of the House last week that we would have two full days to debate this business. By agreement with the Government, there were to be 28 debates on the important issues—such as pensions and travelcards—in which members of the British public are most particularly interested. However, the Government, who have brought to the House a Bill with nearly 500 amendments from another place, guillotine the debate on them after only part of a day's debate. It is an outrage, and the Lord President and his colleagues all know it is. They are a gutless bunch. They know that there is no support for the Bill in the country or the House. They have run away from it.

Mr. Newton: I do not accept what the right hon. Lady has said. When I made my business statement last Thursday, she did not even suggest that she thought that the time to debate the Railways Bill was inadequate. We have had a normal full parliamentary day. I accept that there was a statement at the beginning, but that is not unusual.

We have spent five hours debating two groups of amendments of relatively modest import. On that basis, I calculate that it would take 75 hours of parliamentary time, or four parliamentary weeks, to dispose of the business. That would be without allowing for proper debate on the two most significant amendments that occur in the list. If there is a constitutional outrage, it is the Opposition making such a meal of progress on the Bill.

Mr. Alex Carlile (Montgomery): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. You have often told the House that you are the protector of the rights of Back Benchers, and we respect that. A great many Back Benchers are taking a close interest in the Railways Bill because it affects our constituencies directly. Can it be satisfactory to you, Madam Speaker, that the House of Lords should be seen to be a more democratic debating Chamber than the House of Commons on this Bill?

Madam Speaker: Those are matters that might be debated when we consider the guillotine motion.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Just a moment. Many hon. Members want to raise points of order. I am trying to answer the hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. Carlile). Those are matters that might appropriately be raised at another time.

Mr. John Prescott (Kingston upon Hull, East): The Government told us that there would be about 28 debates. The amendments were tabled last Thursday, and the list of debates was given to us on Sunday. We have dealt with four groups of amendments, Which involved some 100

amendments and a number of clauses. I can think of no other example of a closure or a move towards a business motion for the guillotine in such a short time——

Mr. Alan Duncan (Rutland and Melton): The hon. Gentleman was never in the Committee.

Mr. Prescott: In Committee, we never had a guillotine. We have co-operated in the debates. Our debates never went on for a long time. The Minister and the Secretary of State will agree. What we have is an outrage. As my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) has said, it is a constitutional outrage that the Leader of the House has made that statement, when he is supposed to be defending the rights of Members of the House against the Government.

We cannot accept that, and we shall do all we can to oppose it.

Mr. McAllion: On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: There is no need for points of order. Hon. Members may ask questions arising out of the business statement.

Mr. McAllion: I am sorry; I did not realise that that was the case.

The Leader of the House said that the Opposition were deliberately filibustering to prevent progress on the Bill. I say to him through you, Madam Speaker, that I have been in the Chamber since the debate started at half-past 4, and he has scarcely shown his face here in that time. There has not been one complaint from Ministers or Tory Back Benchers about filibustering.

Hon. Members have been seriously debating the Government amendments. The House should be given the opportunity to continue to do that. It is a disgrace that the Government will make us go away for two weeks' holiday, but are imposing a guillotine on an important measure that will affect constituencies throughout the country. It is time that the Government realised that they cannot use their majority to trample over the rights of the British people.

Several hon. Members *rose——*

Madam Speaker: Order. There has been a business statement and questions should be raised on that.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): Can the Leader of the House tell us why he chose to arrange that the 10 o'clock business motion should not be moved when there are several hours of debate before us, there is no justification for his statement and he has not demonstrated that the House has used the full extent of the time available to it? He has arranged for the deliberate curtailment of debate to make the business statement at 10 o'clock, and will then curtail the debate again by moving the guillotine motion. Does not even he think that extremely unfair, when the Bill is so vital and when the Lords amendments and the Government amendments are so extensive?

Mr. Newton: As I understand it, we are operating on points of order rather than on my responding to questions, but I should appreciate your guidance on that, Madam Speaker. Let me make it clear to the hon. Gentleman that we tabled the 10 o'clock motion so as to allow for the extension of debate, on the assumption that debate was proceeding in a reasonable fashion. It manifestly was not doing so.

Several hon. Members *rose——*

Madam Speaker: Order. The Leader of the House rose, on a point of order, to make a business statement. Therefore, hon. Members may now ask questions arising from that statement.

Mr. Tim Rathbone (Lewes): I hate to disagree with my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House about the lack of advance in the debate but, according to Mr. Deputy Speaker, all the speeches made today were in order. Some of them went on to an untoward length, and we could have done with shorter speeches, but none of them could be ruled as just holding up the business of the House.

In the light of my right hon. Friend's statement, I ask him for a reassurance that the guillotine motion will be certain to allow a long enough time to debate two subjects of concern to many of our constituents. They are the right of British Rail to bid for franchises—the so-called Peyton amendment—and pensions. If we could not have proper debates on those matters, the Government would stand the risk of losing a considerable amount of good will.

Mr. Newton: It is certainly our aim—it was one of the reasons that led me to propose this course, because the way things were going it seemed that a lot of time would be spent on matters other than the debates on the principal issues to which my hon. Friend referred—to allow time for proper debates. Our intention and expectation is that the motion will provide for proper time in which to debate those matters.

Mr. Peter Snape (West Bromwich, East): At what time did the Leader of the House take the disgraceful decision to guillotine the Bill, bearing in mind the fact that, at one stage during the debate, the only Conservative Back Bencher in the Chamber was the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) and the only Minister was the Under-Secretary?

For those of us who care about the future of the railway industry, there is something deeply sickening about the fact that most of the Government Back Benchers can flock in at 10 o'clock to support the disgraceful guillotine, yet none could be here to take part in the debate. Does the Leader of the House agree that the Opposition are not filibustering, but that the shower on the Government benches are neglecting their duties?

Mr. Newton: The decision to table the timetable motion was taken as we saw the progress of debates and as we recognised the statistics. As I told the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett), if this rate of progress continued, the House would still be debating the Bill in December.

Mr. Duncan: Does my right hon. Friend agree that those who sat on the Committee can confirm that the Bill has been examined line by line, clause by clause— *[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. I cannot hear the hon. Gentleman. Hon. Members who want to be called must let the House hear what everyone has to say.

Mr. Duncan: Will my right hon. Friend confirm that the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East rarely turned up to the Committee, and that he slouched in and

[Mr. Duncan]

slouched out? Is not his stunt tonight no more than another stunt to try to become the deputy leader of the Labour party?

Mr. Newton: I did not have the privilege of being a member of the Committee and I cannot testify to the hon. Gentleman's attendance record. However, the Bill has had 183 hours of debate here and in another place. That figure includes 109 hours in Standing Committee. There can be no question of a constitutional outrage following the amount of time that has been devoted to the Bill.

Mr. Nigel Spearing (Newham, South): The Leader of the House told my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer) that insufficient progress was being made on the Bill. Why is he not moving a motion that would allow business to proceed?

Will the Leader of the House tell the House what he has in mind for tomorrow? What time will he table the motion —presumably one must have been drafted—for the debate to finish and only outstanding votes be taken? Does the right hon. Gentleman remember a Bill in the early 1970s during progress on which considerable voting went on through the night on remaining motions to be taken?

Mr. Newton: The motion that I propose to table will provide for a further five hours of debate on the Bill.

Mr. Peter Luff (Worcester): Does my right hon. Friend accept that there will be a general welcome among Conservative Members for the decision to table a motion of this kind? I came to the House with high hopes of having a serious debate about the issues that were raised by the amendments, two of which were highlighted by my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone). Does my right hon. Friend agree that we have been treated to nothing but a series of Second and Third Reading speeches?

Mr. Newton: I am grateful to my hon. Friend, whose vies, I suspect, will be widely shared on the Government benches.

Mr. Archy Kirkwood (Roxburgh and Berwickshire): Will the Leader of the House tell the House the last time that 400 Lords amendments were brought in by the Government in a two-day debate in advance of a recess period of some 14 days between the prorogation of a Session and the Queen's Speech? Is it not possible to find some extra time during this week or early next week to give the Bill the consideration it surely deserves?

Mr. Newton: A substantial number of amendments have come here from another place, but the hon. Gentleman knows well that the vast majority are of a character that one could properly describe as technical.

We have sought to provide what we believe to be adequate time, taking account of the subject matter. I believe that we have allowed the longest period for Commons consideration of Lords amendments for about two years. I will resist the suggestion that inadequate time has been allowed. What has happened today is that adequate time has been misused to the detriment of proper discussions of the Bill.

Dr. John Marek (Wrexham): The Leader of the House has not been in the Chamber for all of today's debate. May I draw to his attention—I hope that he will accept the point after consulting his right hon. and hon. Friends—that, on the penultimate set of amendments, only the Minister spoke, and that the amendments were accepted without Division?

Opposition Members were prepared formally to accept the amendments that we were debating at 10 o'clock, but the Minister said that they were important amendments, and spoke to them for five minutes. Does the Leader of the House accept that the Bill has been substantially rewritten, and that, although the changes might be matters of detail, they are matters of vital detail?

I hope that the guillotine motion that is tabled tomorrow will ensure that there is adequate time for debate. I hope that the Government will not try to wrap up the business by tomorrow night. I hope that you will use what influence you have, Madam Speaker, to resist that, as it would be intolerable. As my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) said, it would be a constitutional outrage if that were allowed to happen.

Mr. Newton: In response to the hon. Gentleman, I simply advert to the point that I have now made twice. At the rate of progress that was made on two amendments, neither of which were among the significant amendments referred to by my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes, it would take a parliamentary month to complete consideration of the Bill.

Mr. Alfred Morris (Manchester, Wythenshawe): Can we have from the Leader of the House the detailed terms of the timetable motion? Clearly he knows the details. Why not tell the House of Commons tonight? He said that there were two outstanding and crucial issues. What is the maximum time available tomorrow for debating those issues?

Mr. Newton: I have already said that the guillotine motion will provide for five hours of further debate. That time would be available for debating the issues to which the right hon. Gentleman refers.

Mr. Matthew Banks (Southport): Will my right hon. Friend make it clear that it will be possible tomorrow to debate the amendments which deal with pensions, and the so-called Peyton amendment referred to by my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone)? Does my right hon. Friend agree that the points made by the Opposition came from hon. Members who spent virtually no time in the Chamber during the debate this afternoon?

Mr. Newton: I am grateful to my hon. Friend. I repeat that, in my judgment, five hours is an appropriate and reasonable amount of time for the further debate required on the Bill.

Mr. Donald Anderson (Swansea, East): Will the Leader of the House bear in mind two factors? When two days were originally assigned for consideration of the Lords amendments, first, it was assumed that the Monday would be open-ended; and secondly, it was not thought that there would be a statement which would take more than one and a half hours and would cut into the debate. Surely even this Leader of the House must recognise that to use the tactic of the guillotine in this way at this time is a dangerous matter, and that he is fashioning a weapon that one day will be used against his side.

Mr. Newton: Might I say to the hon. Gentleman, who is a Member I respect, that this is only the second such

motion that I have moved on a significant Government Bill; so I can hardly be accused of being slap-happy with timetable motions. I shall make a point that I made earlier in a slightly different form. I accept that there was a statement. Other things being equal, that would have made us more inclined to suspend the rule and continue with the debate this evening. However, we did not do so on the basis that the House took five hours to discuss two reasonably limited amendments.

Mr. Brian Wilson (Cunninghame, North): The Leader of the House has repeatedly said that it took five hours to discuss two amendments. Will he confirm that that is the basis on which he made his judgment? In line with his apparent general ignorance of the Bill that he is guillotining, the right hon. Gentleman is wrong on that factual point. We have not dealt with two amendments. We were dealing with the fifth group, and each included a large number of amendments. Is the Leader of the House aware of that or has he been given some nonsense to read to the House which is in direct contradiction of the reality?

Will the Leader of the House confirm that there has been absolutely no time-wasting? Despite his apparent ignorance of the subject that he is dealing with, does he regard the financing of Railtrack, the franchising procedure, the closure procedure and the access charging procedure, all of which we have already dealt with, as minor matters that should be waved through the House?

Does the right hon. Gentleman further confirm that, although we had many hours in Committee, we did not have a guillotine motion? There are 470 amendments from the other place which deal not with minor or technical matters but with major changes to employment rights, a right to bid and, above all, the pension rights of hundreds of thousands of people. They are major issues, not minor or technical ones. Can the Leader of the House confirm that we have had no time to debate the amendments, other than the four hours of debate this afternoon?

Finally, does he understand that it is well understood outside the House, especially when we are about to go on two weeks of unasked-for holiday from this place, that the Government are closing the debate on these matters because they fear debate on them? The body of opinion outside the House already regards the legislation as discredited and being rushed through the House by Ministers who base their actions on dogma and prejudice,and that impression will be confirmed by the disreputable action taken tonight.

Mr. Newton: So far as the first part of what the hon. Gentleman said is concerned, I made it clear that I was referring to the amount of time taken to discuss the first two groups of amendments, which was in the order of five hours. In our view, that meant that there would not be sensible and orderly debate on the remaining amendments in a way which would concentrate on the major issues. Our expectation and hope is that the timetable motion will enable that debate to take place.

Cervical Smears Inquiry (Greenock)

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Andrew Mitchell.]*

10.21 pm

Dr. Norman A. Godman (Greenock and Port Glasgow): Madam Speaker—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. George Foulkes (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order. The hon. Member for Greenock and Port Glasgow (Dr. Godman) has a good voice, if he tries to use it. Come on!

Dr. Godman: I always use my voice properly, Madam Speaker, even when I am being reprimanded by your good self in that charming way.

I shall begin by asking the Minister a serious question because I could argue that I have been misled with regard to a request that I made to him. On Thursday, I asked him for a copy of the response of the Argyll and Clyde health board to the report into the cytology laboratory at the Inverclyde Royal hospital in Greenock. I have an idea that the copy that I received from his office is incomplete. My copy of this important report ends at paragraph 2·5.

I understand that section 3 of the report, which is a response to Dr. McGoogan's report, deals with such matters as discipline and the need for the hospital to be allowed to continue with its application for trust status. I do not believe that the hospital should be given trust status until certain serious concerns involving the management of the hospital are sorted out. I shall welcome the Minister's response to my comment about the incomplete copy of the report that I received from his office. It might have been a genuine mistake, but I am concerned that the report which I have ends abruptly at section 2 of that document.

The Minister and I are here to exchange views on the report of the inquiry into cervical cytopathology at the Inverclyde Royal hospital at Greenock. The four authors of the report are leading experts in their respective fields. They have produced a unanimous report, despite what some members of the health board would have us believe.

Although the Minister and I may disagree profoundly on various aspects of the report, I think that we are at one in our concern to ensure the restoration of public confidence, not only in Inverclyde Royal hospital in Greenock but in the national cervical smear test programme. I am sure he agrees that that confidence, which has taken about four decades to build up, was badly damaged by this scandalous affair at Inverclyde Royal hospital.

When the misreporting of smear test slides was first reported six or seven months ago, not only my constituents but those of my hon. Friends the Members for Dumbarton (Mr. McFall) and for Renfrew, West and Inverclyde (Mr. Graham) and those of the hon. Member for Argyll and Bute (Mrs. Michie) were deeply dismayed at the board's admission that something had gone terribly wrong. We all have a duty to restore public confidence in the hospital and to restore the morale of its staff.

However, we should not allow this scandalous affair to be swept under the carpet. Ten days ago, Mr. Robert Reid, the chairman of the Argyll and Clyde health board, urged us all to set this unfortunate incident behind us. Mr. Reid's "unfortunate incident" was described to me by an angry,

[Dr. Godman]

distressed woman constituent as "this bloody scandal." That is a graphic but accurate description, while Mr. Reid's description is in itself unfortunate.

Thousands of smear test slides were misread by hospital employees who, as the report states in page 56, paragraph 6.25 worked

"in a laboratory which was known to have been over-worked, under-staffed, antiquated and isolated."

Senior medical staff and senior health board officials knew that, but nothing was done about it.

In our surgeries women constituents have told us about having to go back for fresh smear tests. Some of them had to undergo hospital treatment. Is that the way to run a hospital? Is no one to be disciplined over this affair?

The Minister knows that the bruising of local confidence in the hospital was exacerbated by a recently highly contentious and controversial television programme about the hospital. In the interests of patients and hospital staff, we need an independent inquiry into the management of the hospital. That view is shared by many of my constituents and others elsewhere in Inverclyde.

Last week I received a letter from a young woman employee at the hospital. The letter states:

"The recent incidents which have resulted in bringing Inverclyde Royal under the public spotlight have further demoralised staff and undermined patient care. At the IRH all staff regret this.

Only full independent investigations into all areas of concern will restore public and staff disquiet."

I am quoting accurately, but I think that the young woman means that such investigations will restore public and staff confidence in the hospital. The letter continues:

"One welcome first step is the decision to refer surgical procedures to the Royal College of Surgeons."

That young employee is referring to a decision by the Argyll and Clyde health board to invite members of the Royal College of Surgeons in Glasgow to conduct an inquiry into surgical services at the hospital in response to the television programme. I understand that the president of the college, Professor Donald Campbell, declined the invitation on the ground that such an investigation was impossible to conduct unless it was properly constituted. I quote from the *Greenock Telegraph* of 27 October:

"In my view an independent inquiry would lead to the hospital being given a clean bill of health."

Mr. John McFall (Dumbarton): Will my hon. Friend give way?

Dr. Godman: My hon. Friend told me prior to the debate that he wished to contribute, but in the hurly-burly at the start of my remarks I forgot to ask the Minister for his agreement to that.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr. Allan Stewart) *indicated assent.*

Dr. Godman: I ask my hon. Friend to be brief.

Mr. McFall: My hon. Friend will be aware that, in my constituency last year, 1,000 smear tests were sent to the Inverclyde Royal hospital. Does he agree that the public will be satisfied only if some disciplinary action is taken at board level?

On Friday 5 April last year, I had an interview with the district manager of my hospital. He subsequently told me that at that time he had known of the problem with the smear tests, but had decided not to convey that information to me, the Member of Parliament. Instead, he waited a month before doing so. Does my hon. Friend agree that the procedures within the board are wrong and that something has to be done—and the Minister must undertake it—so that public confidence can be restored?

Dr. Godman: I agree with my hon. Friend. As I said earlier, this sorry affair, which has caused so much distress and anxiety among so many women in Inverclyde and elsewhere, should not be seen merely as an unfortunate incident that is now behind us. One question that I wish to put to the Minister, which has been prompted by my reading of the report, is what procedures exist to enable senior managers and, indeed, the Scottish Office to monitor the wrongful, careless or neglectful conduct of senior consultants and, just as important in such a matter, senior hospital administrators. Are those people above discipline? They certainly appear to be above resignation.

I have the greatest respect for the doctors, nurses and ancillary employees at the hospital, the overwhelming majority of whom provide a superb service for their patients. However, there are serious problems with the management of the hospital, and that needs to be examined. I therefore repeat my first question: what procedures exist to allow for the vigorous examination of inappropriate, careless or neglectful conduct by senior consultants, medical administrators or health board officials?

I want to ask the Minister a number of questions, to some of which I have already alerted his staff. Dr. McGoogan and her colleagues say on page 9 of their report:

"The high false negative rate is not the responsibility of one individual alone but can be attributed to deficiencies in . . . the approach of the Argyll and Clyde Health Board to cervical screening"

and to

"the staffing and operation of the laboratory."

In no way do I want a witch hunt of the two individual senior medical people who have direct responsibility. The ultimate responsibility rests with senior management and the board.

On the question of discipline, I accept what the Minister of State, Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, said when I demanded the resignation of the chairman of the board and other disciplinary measures. He wrote:

"As to disciplinary action against senior staff this is a matter solely for the Board. You will appreciate that the Secretary of State could have an appellate role where senior staff are concerned and it would be inappropriate for me to offer any further comment."

However, we should not allow Ministers to make that sort of statement without conducting some sort of investigation and seeking some response from the board about disciplinary measures.

Paragraph 4.8.7 on pages 31 and 32 of the report states:

"As at 25th August 1993, one hundred and fifty-two women with results other than negative"—

in other words, with results other than normal—

"and seven hundred and forty-four women with normal results remain untraced."

I am deeply concerned about that former group—those whose smear tests displayed some form of abnormality but who had not been traced as late as the end of August. What is the Scottish Office doing by way of urging the health board to take every measure to locate each and every one of those 152 women? Naturally it is my hope, and I am sure of all hon. Members present, that each and every one of them will be given a clean bill of health.

The board, assisted by the Scottish Office, must make every effort to trace those women. If the Minister can say tonight that they have been traced and cleared, no one will be happier than me. Some of those women could be in danger and they must be traced.

Similarly, it is essential that the 744 women with normal results come forward for proper smear tests. I am sure that I have the Minister's support in that matter.

It appears that the board was less than helpful to Dr. McGoogan and her colleagues. The Minister may dispute that, but paragraph 5.2.5 on pages 34 and 35 of the report states:

"A request was made for smears to be rescreened and for the histology reports and slides to be reviewed at Inverclyde Royal Hospital to verify the diagnosis and stage of the disease. Despite repeated requests, the information does not link the date and stage of diagnosis of invasive cervical cancer to previous smear reports from these individual women."

I hope that the Minister will address that aspect.

Despite all the criticisms levelled against Dr. Stanworth, paragraph 6.4 of the report states:

"Dr. Stanworth's diligence was also apparent in her willingness to work long hours often without remuneration and at the expense of her own private life."

That individual was engaged in incredibly onerous and difficult work. Together with the Minister for Health, I spent half a day in Dr. McGoogan's laboratory and received some indication of the difficult nature of the work. Dr. Stanworth was working for the health board unpaid—that is how the board treated that loyal servant.

As to acceptance by the Under-Secretary of State for Scotland and by other Ministers in the Scottish Office of the report's recommendations, the Under-Secretary of State stated last Thursday, in answer to a written question of mine, that he and his colleagues accepted the seven recommendations directed at the Scottish Office.

Perhaps the Minister will say something about the need rapidly to implement the recommendation in paragraph 6.36 on page 60 of the report for a

"national health education programme to improve understanding of the benefits of regular screening."

The Scottish Office has accepted that. At Thursday's sitting of the Scottish Grand Committee, I said how pleased my hon. Friend the Member for Renfrew, West and Inverclyde and I were with the many courtesies shown to us by the Minister. However, I am sure that my hon. Friend —who has many thousands of constituents involved in this sorry affair—will agree that we need a national health education programme.

I know that difficulties are involved in bringing the various specialists together; but it seems to me that such a programme is needed, in the light of what has happened at Inverclyde Royal hospital and, more recently, the taking of smear tests in Gateshead and elsewhere in England. It is needed to persuade women to return to the smear-test programme. Confidence has taken a battering. I hope that the Minister will spend a moment or two replying to that question.

Mr. Thomas Graham (Renfrew, West and Inverclyde): As my hon. Friend knows, there has been much concern about the problem, and about the lack of confidence experienced by many women in our area. It is important for the Government to recognise that, and to provide enough money to persuade women to ensure that they do not miss tests but follow them up and have confidence in them. I am also worried—as I know my hon. Friend is—that clinicians seem to be getting out of some of the accusations scot free.

Dr. Godman: I thank my hon. Friend for his intervention.

I am sure that the Minister will support what I am going to say now. The cervical smear test programme is very important in its own right. Cervical cancer is easily detectable in its precursor stage and it is essential that women's confidence in the programme is restored. I hope that every hon. Member supports me in that view.

10.42 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr. Allan Stewart): I congratulate the hon. Member for Greenock and Port Glasgow (Dr. Godman) on obtaining an Adjournment debate on a subject that is of great importance to his constituents, but whose wider importance is shown clearly by the attendance of my hon. Friends the Members for Dudley, West (Dr. Blackburn), for Ayr (Mr. Gallie) and for Edinburgh, West (Lord James Douglas-Hamilton), and the hon. Members for Glasgow, Maryhill (Mrs. Fyfe), for Dumbarton (Mr. McFall), for Glasgow, Provan (Mr. Wray), for Renfrew, West and Inverclyde (Mr. Graham), for Argyll and Bute (Mrs. Michie) and for Moray (Mrs. Ewing).

I entirely agree with what the hon. Member for Greenock and Port Glasgow said about the importance of reassuring women—not just in the Inverclyde area, but nationally—about the smear test programme. Because time is limited, I will not go into the details of the background to the action taken by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and my right hon. and noble Friend the Minister of State. As the hon. Member knows, the inquiry was announced under the independent chairmanship of Dr. McGoogan on 28 April. Its findings were made public, and —as I will explain to the House—are being implemented.

I hope that the House will agree that, by announcing that independent inquiry, the Government demonstrated that they wished to move quickly to explain the position to the general public and to offer the reassurances whose importance hon. Members have rightly emphasised.

I am happy to reassure the House that, as at this date, none of the women concerned were found to have invasive cancer. I agree with the hon. Member for Greenock and Port Glasgow about the stress of the exercise, but I hope that the House will be reassured by that outcome.

I am sure that the House will accept that the inquiry team completed its task despite a demanding time scale, beginning work in early May and publishing its report on 9 September. The report has been widely distributed throughout Scotland, the United Kingdom and worldwide. As hon. Members know, a copy was placed in the Library.

The report should reassure women in Scotland of, first, the health benefits of regular smear testing and, secondly, that implementation of the recommendations will reinforce the already high standard of the screening programme in Scotland.

Mrs. Maria Fyfe (Glasgow, Maryhill): Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Stewart: I shall give way, but I am sure that the hon. Lady will appreciate the pressure on time.

Mrs. Fyfe: Will the Minister give the time scale within which the recommendations will be implemented?

Mr. Stewart: I give the hon. Lady the general assurance that the Government are determined to ensure that progress on implementation proceeds as quickly as circumstances will allow, with continual monitoring of progress. May I spell out what that means in detail?

The report's recommendations fall into three main categories—those directed at the Scottish Office Home and Health Department, those directed at the health board and those directed at its laboratories. The aim is to implement these as quickly as practicable. The process involves consultations and discussions with professional bodies, health bodies and trusts on the details.

Of the seven recommendations directed to the Scottish Office Home and Health Department, we have already announced that we shall set up a central co-ordinating unit for cervical screening on similar lines to that in place for the Scottish breast cancer screening programme. That will be funded centrally, at an estimated cost of £100,000 per annum. There is a guarantee on the future of the proficiency testing scheme, which costs an estimated £20,000 per annum and is an important element in maintaining standards of smear testing in all NHS laboratories.

We are preparing and will issue guidance to health boards, trusts and their laboratories on proposals in respect of training, staffing—including grading and staffing levels —health education and the rationalisation of laboratories.

The hon. Member for Greenock and Port Glasgow asked in particular about health education. I confirm that discussions have already taken place with the Health Education Board for Scotland on promoting a national health education programme to improve awareness of the benefits of regular cervical screening. The results of the discussions will be reported to the House in due course.

We are now working to finalise the membership of the working groups, which will address quality control and guidelines for training techniques in smear taking, staffing and the rationalisation of laboratories. The handling of perceived reporting discrepancies, as I told the Scottish Grand Committee, will be looked at in the light of the report of the Calman committee, which was set up following the problem in Birmingham.

On the recommendations directed to the board and its laboratories, the hon. Member for Greenock and Port Glasgow will know that the health boards set up a task force headed by a senior health board member. It has produced an interim report, and a formal report was submitted on 27 October to the chief executive of the management executive. He is studying its contents and will closely monitor implementation.

I confirm that the board has already implemented the recommendations which ensure that monitoring and evaluation include the comparison of statistical returns and an audit of the screening history of all new cases of squamous carcinoma of the cervix and that all aspects of quality assurance are exercised in the laboratory and funded accordingly. The board has confirmed that it will make provision for continuing education for technical and medical staff of non-training grades and that a person in each hospital should ascertain that all staff make use of it.

The board accepts all but two of the remaining recommendations directed at it and proposes to implement them once a further investigation of possible options and alternatives has been fully carried out by a health board working group. The board considers that the two recommendations will require a longer period of implementation but they have been accepted by the board.

I am aware that, in the time available, I have not answered every detailed question asked by the hon. Member for Greenock and Port Glasgow, but I assure him that I shall write to him with those detailed answers. I shall, however, respond to the very important question about the number of women still to be traced. There are 69 women still to be traced, 53 of whom are thought to be in the United States. The board is liaising closely with the United States' authorities and following up addresses of women and their relatives elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

The motion having been made after Ten o'clock and the debate having continued for half an hour, MADAM SPEAKER *adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.*

Adjourned at nine minutes to Eleven o'clock.

House of Commons

Tuesday 2 November 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRIVATE BUSINESS

WOODGRANGE PARK CEMETERY BILL *[Lords]*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

That Standing Order 205 (Notice of Third Reading) be suspended and that the Bill be now read the third time.—*[The Chairman of Ways and Means.]*

Hon. Members: Object.

BRITISH WATERWAYS BILL *[Lords]*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

That the Promoters of the British Waterways Bill *[Lords]* shall have leave to suspend proceedings thereon in order to proceed with the Bill, if they think fit, in the next Session of Parliament, provided that the Agents for the Bill give notice to the Clerks in the Private Bill Office not later than the day before the close of the present Session of their intention to suspend further proceedings and that all Fees due on the Bill up to that date be paid;

That, if the Bill is brought from the Lords in the next Session, the Agent for the Bill shall deposit in the Private Bill Office a declaration signed by him, stating that the Bill is the same, in every respect, as the Bill which was brought from the Lords in the present Session;

That, as soon as a certificate by one of the Clerks in the Private Bill Office, that such a declaration has been so deposited, has been laid upon the Table of the House, the Bill shall be read the first and second time and committed (and shall be recorded in the Journal of this House as having been so read and committed);

That all Petitions relating to the Bill presented in the present Session which stand referred to the Committee on the Bill, together with any minutes of evidence taken before the Committee on the Bill, shall stand referred to the Committee on the Bill in the next Session;

That no Petitioners shall be heard before the Committee on the Bill, unless their Petition has been presented within the time limited within the present Session or deposited pursuant to paragraph *(b)* of Standing Order 126 relating to Private Business;

That, in relation to the Bill, Standing Order 127 relating to Private Business shall have effect as if the words "under Standing Order 126 (Reference to committee of petitions against Bill)" were omitted;

That no further Fees shall be charged in respect of any proceedings on the Bill in respect of which Fees have already been incurred during the present Session;

That these Orders be Standing Orders of the House.—*[The Chairman of Ways and Means.]*

Hon. Members: Object.

GREATER MANCHESTER (LIGHT RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM) BILL *[LORDS].*

Ordered,

That the Promoters of the Greater Manchester (Light Rapid Transit System) Bill *[Lords]* shall have leave to suspend proceedings thereon in order to proceed with the Bill, if they think fit, in the next Session of Parliament, provided that the Agents for the Bill give notice to the Clerks in the Private Bill Office of their intention to suspend further proceedings not later than the day before the close of the present Session and that all Fees due on the Bill up to that date be paid;

Ordered,

That, if the Bill is brought from the Lords in the next Session, the Agents for the Bill shall deposit in the Private Bill Office a declaration signed by them, stating that the Bill is the same, in every respect, as the Bill which was brought from the Lords in the present Session;

Ordered,

That, as soon as a certificate by one of the Clerks in the Private Bill Office, that such a declaration has been so deposited, has been laid upon the Table of the House, the Bill shall be read the first and second time and committed (and shall be recorded in the Journal of this House as having been so read and committed) and shall be committed to the Chairman of Ways and Means, who shall make such Amendments thereto as have been made by the Committee in the present Session, and shall report the Bill as amended to the House forthwith, and the Bill, so amended, shall be ordered to lie upon the Table.

Ordered,

That no further Fees shall be charged in respect of any proceedings on the Bill in respect of which Fees have alrady been incurred during the present Session;

Ordered,

That these Orders be Standing Orders of the House.—*[The Chairman of Ways and Means.]*

Mr. Bennett *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Is the hon. Gentleman objecting to the Greater Manchester Bill?

Mr. Bennett: My objection, Madam Speaker, was to the British Waterways Bill, which I thought was the first question that you put.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman actually objected to the first motion. The Question that I put was,

That Standing Order 205 (Notice of Third Reading) be suspended and the Bill now be read the third time.

That is the motion which the hon. Gentleman objected to. The objection must stand for the moment, although I take it that he is also objecting to the Waterways Bill.

Sir Michael Neubert: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. It is obvious that the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett) did not understand the position when he objected to the first motion. Could you not exercise your discretion and allow it to pass on this occasion?

Madam Speaker: Of course I can. I think that is a very common-sense approach. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] I am glad to have the support of the House.

WOODGRANGE PARK CEMETERY BILL *[Lords]*

Considered.

Ordered,

That Standing Order 205 (Notice of Third Reading) be suspended and that the Bill be now read the Third time.—*[The Chairman of Ways and Means].*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed, with amendments.

Oral Answers to Questions

EDUCATION

Capital Expenditure, Manchester

1. **Mr. Bradley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he will approve in full Manchester's bid for capital expenditure on schools for 1994-95; and if he will make a statement.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Mr. Eric Forth): Manchester's capital bid will be decided on its merits. We shall announce our decision on all the local education authority bids in December.

Mr. Bradley: I hope the Minister has read the brilliant documentation of disrepair in Manchester schools in my constituency. I know that he is having a meeting with a delegation from Manchester city council next month, and I hope that he will work positively with its members to ensure that resources are made available for remodelling, repair and rebuilding of Manchester's schools, particularly Parrswood high school and St. Paul's school in my constituency. Will he ensure that all Manchester's children receive a quality education in quality schools and buildings?

Mr. Forth: I am looking most carefully at Manchester's bid, as I look at all education authority bids. Manchester has done remarkably well over the last few years, and I do not wish to embarrass other local education authorities who might be envious of just how well it has done. I remain conscious of the needs of Manchester and other local education authorities. We will not only listen carefully to what the delegation has to say, but do our best to meet all reasonable requests from Manchester and other places.

Mr. Thurnham: Does my hon. Friend agree that Manchester council would have more money to spend on its schools if it ran its affairs generally in a more efficient fashion? Have not the local government ombudsman and the Audit Commisssion identified numerous areas where money is wasted? For instance, 60 lecturers have been told to stay at home while the council spends £1 million on their salaries.

Mr. Forth: I am not sure that I can take those precise factors into account when considering Manchester's capital bid; however, I expect Manchester and all the other local education authorities to take full advantage of the Chancellor's generosity in allowing them to use all capital receipts this year, without let or hindrance. I hope that they will do that, and direct a good deal of the money towards educational needs.

Mr. Eastham: Will the Minister give some consideration to the serious position of schools in Manchester? In north Manchester—which constitutes about one fifth of my constituency, Blackley—each of 18 schools needs expenditure of more than £100,000. Is the Minister prepared to spend the money, or else find himself having to replace those schools with new buildings in four or five years' time?

Mr. Forth: I hope that the hon. Gentleman is directing such questions to Manchester local education authority —in the light of what my hon. Friend the Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Thurnham) has said, in the light of what I have said about capital receipts and in the light of the fact that the LEAs have enormous discretion in prioritising their own work. I hope that the hon. Gentleman is quizzing the LEA; it is to the LEA that he should look.

Single European Market

2. **Mr. Ian Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what aspects of the curriculum prepare school children for the opportunities of the single European market.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Further and Higher Education (Mr. Timothy Boswell): The national curriculum provides for all pupils a broad and balanced education which will equip them with the skills, knowledge and understanding appropriate for adult life and for the world of work within the European Community. The Department has issued informal guidance on how this European dimension can be addressed through individual subjects, particularly modern foreign languages, geography and history.

Mr. Taylor: While education must remain very much the responsibility of national Governments, does my hon. Friend agree that preparing young people for the opportunities and challenges presented by the single market—and also for the needs of companies that now operate on a pan-European scale—requires schools to take more and more children post-16, and to broaden their education by giving it a European dimension? Will my hon. Friend pay tribute to the work of the United Kingdom Centre for European Education in this regard?

Mr. Boswell: I agree very much with my hon. Friend on two counts. First, I approve of his emphasis on the fact that the European dimension must respect the national education systems that must deliver education; secondly, I endorse his praise for the United Kingdom Centre for European Education, where he and I shared a platform this morning. I was able to introduce to the conference, and the consultative process, the Commission's Green Paper, which is designed to set up proper measures for co-operation—but not harmonisation—in European education policies.

Mr. Madden: Does the Minister accept that the teaching of children will be made immensely more difficult in places such as Bradford if section 11 funding, and other funding aimed at tackling deprivation and disadvantage, is reduced? Will he take this opportunity to confirm or deny recent reports that Bradford's section 11 funding is to be substantially reduced?

Mr. Boswell: The hon. Gentleman could take a few lessons in relevance before asking such questions. I have noted what he said, as have my colleagues; I hope, however, that he will remember that there is only one broad pot for education spending, and that any money that is spent for one purpose may not be available for another.

Mr. Quentin Davies: The national curriculum's requirement that every child learn a foreign language undoubtedly represents a major step forward, but is there

not a long way to go before our children are as well prepared for business in the single market as children in some other Community countries such as Germany—not to mention Holland and Sweden? Do we not need to invest more in training language teachers, and expanding the range of opportunities for children to learn foreign languages?

Mr. Boswell: Our education system undoubtedly has some strengths—for example, in information technology—but it also has a number of weaknesses. I think that most of us feel that in respect of our performance in modern foreign languages. A strong emphasis has been placed on the issue, and we have discussed it with the Commissioner in the context of his proposed changes to the Lingua programme.

Student Awards

3. **Mr. Hain:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to provide special funding next year for discretionary student awards.

Mr. Boswell: That is a matter for local education authorities. They are already free to devote to discretionary awards whatever portion of their total resources they consider appropriate to local needs and circumstances.

Mr. Hain: Surely the Minister is insulting the House with that reply. He knows that every local education authority that wishes to fund students who need discretionary grants is prevented from doing so by the cuts in budgets which have been imposed by central Government. Is he aware that he is consigning many thousands of students, from those of medicine to those of music, who depend or would depend on a discretionary student grant, to an impossible position in which they cannot continue their further and higher education? Why does not he grasp that nettle? Why has he not published the study of the subject by the Gulbenkian and Sir John Cass foundations, which was promised by the Prime Minister in the summer?

Mr. Boswell: We increased education spending by about 2·6 per cent. last year, and that is available for local authorities to spend on what they regard as their priorities. If they choose to take funds away and spend them in some other sector, that is a matter for them. The hon. Gentleman would be the first to complain if we took away that discretion from them.

As for the point that the hon. Gentleman made about discretionary awards, we have not published the Gulbenkian and Sir John Cass foundations' study because it is not ours to publish. The document is being prepared by the National Foundation for Educational Research. I shall read it—as will the hon. Gentleman, I am sure—with great interest when the detailed findings are available. I have already told the House, from the early part of that study before the detailed work was done, that there was evidence of a continuation of spending and the number of awards made, both of which are slightly higher than they were three years ago.

Mr. Garnier: My hon. Friend must be aware that in my constituency there are premises of Leicester university and of De Montfort university. Is he aware that students at those universities find it difficult to manage on their grants because the socialist council in the city of Leicester is imposing hideous regulations on private landlords, pricing private residential accommodation out of the reach of students? Will he, with the co-operation of the Department of the Environment, ensure that unnecessary regulations affecting student housing are not implemented?

Mr. Boswell: I am very grateful to my hon. Friend for that point. I am very much in the business, from this Dispatch Box, of promoting academic deregulation wherever possible and preventing unnecessary and expensive regulations either in the capital programmes of universities and colleges or, indeed, in student accommodation. Although it is not a direct responsibility of the Department, and it has relevance to my colleagues in the Department of the Environment, I have noted what my hon. Friend said and I will take forward his specific suggestion.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: Whether the Minister likes it or not, the discretionary grants provision is now in a state of crisis. He promised the results of the Gulbenkian study before the summer and said that they were imminent, but we still await the results of that report. Even if he does not know, we know already that four local education authorities have cut discretionary grants altogether, another 10 have cut grants down to fees only and the majority have cut back on provision of discretionary grants. Is the Minister aware, as he ought to be, that the people who depend on discretionary grants are those who would not get into education without the grants? Will the tell the House here and now what steps he is taking to ensure that next year those grants will be available for the people who need them?

Mr. Boswell: I am sorry that the hon. Gentleman is such a slow learner. I have already explained to the House why I cannot publish the survey, which is not in my hands to publish. We are not sitting on it.

The hon. Gentleman made a series of assertions in a paper that he submitted to the Department in July, including, at that time, the assertion that three local authorities had decided to make no discretionary awards. I have not, as far as I am aware, been given the names of those authorities. He has now increased the number to four. As I told him at the time, if he is prepared to name them, my Department will investigate because not to make any payments is an improper use of the discretionary procedure.

Mr. Batiste: Is not the sad reality that too many Labour local authorities, such as mine in Leeds, simply do not attach sufficient importance to education to make a fair share of resources available for discretionary grants?

Mr. Boswell: My hon. Friend is exactly on the point. It is no good giving discretion to local authorities if they then turn round and dislike the discretion that they have been given because they have put it into directions which are their own priorities and not the priorities of students.

I noted the suggestion of the hon. Member for Stretford (Mr. Lloyd). Of course, in certain areas less is paid. We shall know more when the detailed survey is completed. I am as anxious as he is that it should be completed. It is no excuse for a local authority to say that it has not been given the money—it has.

School Leavers

4. **Mr. Mandelson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to improve the transition of school leavers from school to work.

Mr. Boswell: All the Government's policies for school education, and particularly the national curriculum, are designed to prepare pupils for adult and working life.

In addition to raising the standards of skills and knowledge achieved by all pupils, the Government are ensuring that they will benefit from a planned programme of careers education and guidance. This should assist them in taking advantage of the three clear qualifications pathways that we are developing.

Mr. Mandelson: In the light of two reports on education standards—one published last week and the other, from the National Commission on Education, which will appear shortly—does the Minister accept that thousands of school leavers, mostly from deprived backgrounds and communities, are being badly let down by the school system? Is it not time for the Government to undertake an urgent examination of education provision for those above and below the school leaving age, so that the full range, quality and the co-ordination of education and training opportunities are significantly improved?

Mr. Boswell: I will not comment on documents that I have not seen and which have not been published. I felt that the most striking aspects of the recent report by the Office for Standards in Education was the way in which it emphasised teachers' low expectations of their pupils in difficult areas and areas of social stress. I agree with the hon. Gentleman—if this is the point that he was making—that the problem needs addressing. Ofsted has produced an excellent report. Through our proposals for a large expansion in further education and, at school level, through the national curriculum, we are trying to provide a basis for all pupils, whatever their aptitudes and abilities and, above all, whatever their social backgrounds, to have the right to a decent education and to proper motivation from their teachers, as well as reasonable expectations of the very considerable progress that they can make.

Mr. Patrick Thompson: Will my hon. Friend take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work of the Foyer project, which is one of eight pilot projects supported by his right hon. and hon. Friends at the Department of Employment? It is intended to help young people in the transition between school and work, especially those who have difficulty in finding housing in Norwich and other parts of the country and also those young people who may have some difficulty at home. Will he pay full tribute to the excellent work that is being done in Norwich and elsewhere on that splendid project?

Mr. Boswell: I most readily join my hon. Friend in paying tribute to that project. I must emphasise the importance of studying the period around year 11 and subsequent years at school, when pupils make extremely critical career choices. They are entitled to as much guidance and support as we can possibly produce for them.

Mr. Grocott: Will the Minister reflect on the simple truth that seems to be obvious to everyone except the Government, which is that the greatest problem that has consistently faced school leavers is that their prospects of finding employment are worse than under any other Government since the war? Will he reflect on the tremendous damage that is done within schools when pupils have the certain knowledge that, however hard they try and however many exams they pass, their prospects of finding full-time employment when they leave are minimal as long as this Government is in office? Does he not feel thoroughly ashamed to be a member of a Government who are responsible for that?

Mr. Boswell: I am staggered that the hon. Gentleman has not noticed that unemployment has already decreased by 84,000 this year. I hope that he will not put it about to our school leavers that it is not worth staying on to get skills and qualifications, because growing numbers of them are staying on and were already doing so before the recession—71 per cent. are now staying on full time. That is a good investment in their future and I saw a specialist class at a further education college the other day which had a turnout into employment of more than 90 per cent. because of the high level of skills achieved.

Mr. Forman: While I welcome the thrust of the Government's policy in that area, does my hon. Friend agree that one of the greatest needs is for more vocational courses to be taken in schools at an earlier stage? In that context, will my hon. Friend give a further push to the excellent general national vocational qualifications, which provide a good path for that purpose?

Mr. Boswell: I pay tribute to my hon. Friend the Member for Carshalton and Wallington (Mr. Forman) who, if not the father, was the godfather of general national vocational qualifications. They form a splendid path of new qualifications and are being taken up by upwards of 500 schools and 500 colleges this autumn. We have most ambitious targets for their uptake—we want a quarter of all children who fall within the appropriate age group to take them up within a short time. For the first time, the Government have pioneered proper and appropriate qualifications, blending education and vocation, and providing parity of esteem with the academic route with which we are familiar.

Special Needs

5. **Mr. Janner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education when he last reviewed the statementing process for children with special educational needs; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Forth: The Education Act 1993 and the draft code of practice issued last week will significantly improve the arrangements for the education of all children with special needs—those with and those without statements. As a result, statements will be made more quickly and written more clearly—to the benefit of children and their parents. We also issued draft regulations which would, for the first time, bind local education authorities to time limits when making assessments and statements.

Mr. Janner: Is the Minister aware that a 13-year-old constituent of mine was, to use the odious phrase, "statemented" and, to the anguish of her parents, excluded from mainstream school? There is no other accommodation for her anywhere in Leicester so she receives her education at home for the statutory minimum of just five hours a week—only when her tutor is well, which she is not at present. Is it not disgraceful that the children who

most need education receive the least education because local education authorities such as Leicestershire simply do not have the money to extend the hours? Will the Minister be good enough to look at that aspect of the statementing problem to see whether he can find a way to help local education authorities to provide education at home for those children who, through no fault of their own, cannot receive education at ordinary schools?

Mr. Forth: Obviously, provided all the existing appeals mechanisms have been properly exhausted, I shall want to look at the case raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Mr. Janner: They have.

Mr. Forth: If that is so, we shall want to look at the case. I believe that the Education Act 1993, which places new duties on authorities, the code of practice, which brings new uniformity and clarity to the process of making statements for children, the time limits and the SEN tribunal, all add up to a better deal for the children in our schools who have special educational needs. It is no excuse for any local education authority to hide behind the resources whinge if it is not fulfilling its duties towards children with special educational needs. If that is what the hon. and learned Gentleman's local education authority is doing, it is a disgrace.

Mr. Congdon: Does my hon. Friend agree that many parents will welcome the much strengthened provisions in the new Education Act for those with special educational needs, particularly the time limits on the statementing process? Does he also agree that it is up to the schools to ensure that they identify those children with special needs and ensure that their needs are properly meet?

Mr. Forth: Indeed. My hon. Friend played his part in bringing the Education Act to fruition and on to the statute book, for which I am grateful. He pinpointed the fact that we are rightly going to lay the onus very much on schools, which must have a special educational needs policy. The code of practice rightly lays on schools the principal responsibility for constantly assessing pupils' needs, identifying those needs and meeting them. That will be a considerable step towards providing properly for all children and their needs.

Mr. Win Griffiths: I thank the Minister and, having listened to his opening reply, may I say that I agreed with every word of it. The draft code of practice is a most commendable document—the only thing wrong with it is the colour of its cover, but we can stand that. For all the good ideas drafted in the code of practice, unless there are sufficient resources, all the fine words it contains will count for nothing—that is not a resources whinge by a local authority.

Will the Minister do two things? First, will he undertake a survey on what has happened to special educational needs provision over the past four years? I think that he will find that it has not improved in many spheres. Secondly, when local authorities come forward, will he commit himself to providing the resources to implement the fine instructions given in the code of practice; otherwise it will be a scandal?

Mr. Forth: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for his kind remarks, but I must say that the answer to both his questions is no. A survey of the kind that he suggests would be useless because it would be looking to the past, when the future is about the Education Act, the code of practice and all that is in them, together with the tribunal. I believe that, as a result of the Act and the code of practice, there will be a much better, more effective and efficient use of existing resources in directing them properly towards pupils in a structured and clear way. I do not believe, therefore, that we should necessarily assume that the improved provision for special educational needs that the Act and the code of practice will bring necessarily demands a blanket spraying of resources around local education authorities. The resources will be better directed by what is in the code of practice. I look forward very much to seeing an improved quality in the delivery of service.

Grant-maintained Schools

6. **Mr. Rowe:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many grant-maintained schools there are in Kent, distinguishing between *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary; and how many applications for grant-maintained status are under consideration.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education (Mr. Robin Squire): Fifty-four secondary schools and 12 primary schools in Kent are already self-governing and enjoying the freedom that grant-maintained status brings. A further seven secondary schools and seven primary schools are in the process of acquiring GM status.

Mr. Rowe: Does not that remarkable figure clearly demonstrate how popular the policy of grant-maintained schools is? Will my hon. Friend comment on the recent article by the director of education in Kent, who, apparently relying on the convention that officials are immune from political attack, chose to attack in an exaggerated and extraordinary form the policy of the Government?

Mr. Squire: I agree with my hon. Friend's praise for self-governing schools. I also agree that the article by the director of education, which was published in *The Times Educational Supplement,* was both inaccurate and misleading. That is not only my view; I notice that, the following week, the TES published letters from a significant number of head teachers and others making precisely the same points.

Let me reassure my hon. Friend that in Kent and elsewhere, as parents have those ballots, they will draw their lessons from the success of schools on the ground rather than from the articles to which my hon. Friend referred.

Mr. Don Foster: Will the Minister acknowledge that the disgraceful decision to allow only voluntary-aided and grant-maintained schools to apply for moneys under the new technology schools initiative is nothing more than a bribe to persuade yet more schools in Kent and elsewhere to opt out? Will he explain why the advice of the chairman of the City Technology Colleges trust was ignored? What further bribes does he propose to offer to try to boost the flagging grant-maintained school initiative?

Mr. Squire: The simplest answer that I can give to the hon. Gentleman is to say that he is wrong. The policy to which he refers was highlighted by the Prime Minister in

1991, it was in our election manifesto in 1992, it was in my right hon. Friend's White Paper following that and it was in the legislation.

Mr. Dunn: Given that grant-maintained schools in Kent moved out of local education authority control only because parents wished to do so, is the Minister aware that the Lib-Lab controlled Kent county council is now objecting to all grant-maintained school applications, yet did not have the guts to tell the people of Kent of its policy during and before the recent Kent county council elections?

Mr. Squire: I find it sad that the circumstances outlined by my hon. Friend took place in Kent and, for all I know, in other counties. In the forthcoming elections, I hope that the parties—whatever their views on self-governing schools—will not hesitate to put their views before the electorate. If, like Opposition Members, they believe that self-governing schools are wrong, they should say so and make that clear to the electorate before they vote.

Nursery Education

7. **Mr. Wray:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidelines he recommends for pupil-teacher ratios for nursery education in areas of deprivation.

Mr. Robin Squire: There are no recommendations made on staffing levels specifically for nursery education in areas of deprivation. The long-standing recommended staffing levels for all pupils in nursery education are for a minimum of two staff members for every 26 children in nursery classes and two for 20 children in nursery schools; in both cases, one member of staff should be a qualified teacher and one a qualified nursery assistant.

Mr. Wray: According to the statistics from the Library, 26:1 is the average pupil-teacher ratio in the United Kingdom. Does the Minister agree that thousands of children are missing out on nursery education? Will he take a leaf out of the Plowden report, which recommends that areas of deprivation should have pupil-teacher ratios as low as 10:1? Does not the Government's capping of local authorities mean that they cannot spend the money that they would like to spend on nursery education?

Mr. Squire: As the hon. Gentleman knows, and as has already been referred to, how money is used by local authorities is a matter for them. The hon. Gentleman also knows that within the grant distribution system, significant extra sums go to areas of major deprivation.

Mr. Anthony Coombs: Does my hon. Friend agree with Ofsted and Professor David Hargreaves, former chief inspector of the Inner London education authority, that standards in nursery schools and the primary sector in deprived areas depend not so much on pupil-teacher ratios as on high expectations from teachers and good leadership from head teachers? Is not it true that those are underpinned by policies of rigorous assessment and league tables, which are understood by the vast majority of parents in Britain but are completely misunderstood by the Opposition?

Mr. Squire: I agree with my hon. Friend's excellent comments. I suspect that one thing that would transform education in some of our inner cities would be the stretching of all pupils by teachers so that pupils are tested to the very limit of their abilities rather than taught down to.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: In view of the Minister's last answer, will he clarify the Government's position with regard to nursery school league tables? Does the Minister accept that the Ofsted report, praised by the Under-Secretary of State for Further and Higher Education earlier this afternoon, points out the critical role of nursery education? Is not it a remarkable condemnation of 14 years of Conservative Government that so many young children are denied the best start in education? If parents, governors, teachers and now Ofsted can see the value of nursery education, why will not Ministers lift one finger to help extend nursery provision and provide the best start for all our children?

Mr. Squire: Far from simply lifting a finger, as the hon. Lady says, the Government have acted and significantly increased the numbers in nursery education since we have been in power. But we do not believe that nursery education is the only answer for pre-school aged children. As the hon. Lady well knows, more than 90 per cent. of three and four-year-olds in Britain are educated in some form of group activity, a rich and varied form of education and training.

Grant-maintained Schools

9. **Mrs. Peacock:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many local authorities now have more than 10 per cent. of their pupils being educated in grant-maintained schools.

The Secretary of State for Education (Mr. John Patten): In 30 local authorities, 10 per cent. or more of all pupils are already being educated in self-governing schools. In 47 local authorities, more than 10 per cent. of secondary pupils are educated in grant-maintained schools and 15 per cent. of the country's secondary pupils are now educated in grant-maintained schools—nearly 500,000 pupils today.

Mrs. Peacock: What responsibilities will the funding agency have for schools in areas in which more than 10 per cent. of pupils are in grant-maintained schools?

Mr. Patten: The new Funding Agency for Schools will have considerable powers in such areas. Once more than 75 per cent. of pupils in either the primary or secondary sector are being educated in grant-maintained schools, the Funding Agency for Schools will take over the planning of school places in its entirety. Local education authorities can ask to go into the care of the Funding Agency for Schools long before that if they wish. Already at least one borough, Hillingdon, has passed the 75 per cent. point, so from 1 April the Funding Agency for Schools will be dealing with all the schools in Hillingdon, shortly to be joined by Brent and a good number of other local authorities.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: What plans does the Secretary of State have to force all schools to adopt grant-maintained status by abolishing local education authorities and when can we expect an announcement about that?

Mr. Patten: None, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Pawsey: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the principal opposition to grant-maintained schools comes from two sources; politically motivated local education authorities and local education authorities which seek to protect their education empires?

Will my right hon. Friend accept my congratulations on the appointment of Sir Christopher Benson to the Funding Agency for Schools? Does he agree that Sir Christopher will reach those parts of the educational scene that other educationists will not reach?

Mr. Patten: On the first two parts of my hon. Friend's question, the answers are yes and yes.

As for Sir Christopher Benson, we are extremely fortunate to have the present serving chairman of the Housing Corporation moving to the Funding Agency for Schools. He is a man with an international reputation and that makes the attack on him in *The Guardian* by the Opposition spokesman on education all the more disgraceful. He has not been attacked by any Labour Front Bencher during his tenure as chairman of the Housing Corporation, yet the hon. Lady has started to attack him before he has even taken up his job.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: Will the Secretary of State confirm that there were 95 school ballots on grant-maintained status in October last year, while there were just 19 ballots in October this year? Will the Secretary of State also confirm that it is five years to the day since the first school ballots for grant-maintained status took place and that, at the rate at which schools have become grant-maintained, it will take the best part of the century to reach the Government's targets?

Does the Secretary of State have any plans to revise the targets, now that his bribe-and-divide policy is simply running out of steam?

Mr. Patten: We have no targets; we have figures. Already this year some 450 schools have taken part in ballots on grant-maintained status and there will be another 50 ballots before Christmas.

The hon. Lady simply does not understand her brief. I understand that a learned judge has said recently that repetitive strain injury does not exist; repetitive political self-damage occurs every time that the hon. Lady opens her mouth.

Mr. Burns: Will my right hon. Friend join me in condemning the petty, vicious and nasty policy of the Labour and Liberal-controlled Essex county council, which is seeking to cut all capital funding to any school in Essex which thinks about or puts in motion a grant-maintained ballot?

Mr. Patten: I am afraid that the Lib-Lab-Democrat pact which is now in charge in Essex runs Kent very close for the title of the worst education authority among the new Lib-Lab controlled shires.

I agree with everything that my hon. Friend said. It is entirely wrong for any local authority to attempt to use bully-boy—and, to satisfy the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor), bully-girl—tactics to stop schools voting in favour of grant-maintained status.

Literacy

10. **Mr. Robert Ainsworth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what recent study he has made of national literacy standards.

Mr. Patten: Standards in the teaching and learning of reading and writing in schools are continually monitored by the Office for Standards in Education, and the national curriculum testing arrangements for English will provide a regular measurement of the attainment of pupils. Adult literacy is monitored on the Government's behalf by the excellent adult literacy and basic skills unit. The raising of literacy standards is a top priority for the Government's policies for education and is reflected by the substantial support which we are providing for the Reading Recovery and the Family Literacy initiatives.

Mr. Ainsworth: The Minister will be aware of the planned reduction from £129 million to £90 million of section 11 funding. Those cuts will affect Coventry, where three quarters of that money is spent on English as a second language. How on earth do those cuts fit in with the Government's stated priorities? Is this a case of two Ministries which are not able to work together? Is it a case of the Government saying one thing and doing another, or is it simply that people from ethnic minorities do not figure highly in the Government's priorities?

Mr. Patten: They figure very highly. I say three things to the hon. Gentleman. First, I share his interest in ensuring that all our children from ethnic minority communities are well educated. Secondly, he should reflect on whether all the money that was previously earmarked for section 11 funds in years past was well spent. Much of it was spent by labour local education authorities such as Avon on paying general teachers' salaries rather than section 11 teachers' salaries. Thirdly, while I agree that some teaching of mother tongue languages or English as a second language may be important for newly landed immigrant children, the first language of all our children should be English. That is what should be taught in our schools.

Sir Nicholas Fairbairn: As a Scotsman, may I say that the English language is the greatest and most necessary opportunity that one can give to a child, and the younger the better, if the child is to find employment and be impressive. The civil service has hardly shown us the way in its reports. Idiotic phrases such as "statementing process", as was used in question No. 5, show that the civil service is destroying English. It ought not to.

Mr. Patten: I shall refer the second part of my hon. and learned Friend's question to my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who has ministerial responsibility for the civil service. As for the first part, I regard it as critical that all our children are brought up to speak standard English clearly and with confidence; that helps to level all our children up. Standard English should be spoken clearly and with confidence, whatever accent is used to deliver it. That includes the accent of my hon. and learned Friend.

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Q1. **Mr. Hinchliffe:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 2 November.

The Prime Minister (Mr. John Major): This morning, I had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in the House, I shall be having further meetings later today.

Mr. Hinchliffe: Is the Prime Minister aware that early next month Mrs. Margaret Humphreys will become the first British citizen outside the royal family to be awarded the prestigious Order of Australia medal for her work in rehabilitating victims of the British child migrants scheme? In recognition of that award, will the Prime Minister set up an independent public inquiry into the operation of the scheme until 1967 and the resulting appalling treatment of vast numbers of British children? In view of his professed commitment to open government, will the Prime Minister end the disgraceful Government cover-up of the issue once and for all?

The Prime Minister: I am certainly happy to congratulate Mrs. Humphreys on her award. I was not aware that that was the case, but I give her my warmest congratulations. As the hon. Gentleman will know—for I am aware that he has taken a great interest in the matter—the migration schemes to Australia and other countries were run at the time by respected national voluntary bodies. The Government's concern now is to ensure that former child migrants who want to make contact with their families are able to do so. Any concern about the treatment of the children in another country is essentially a matter for the authorities in that country.

Dame Jill Knight: In the light of the broadcast by Gerry Adams last week and the offence that it caused to a great number of people, will my right hon. Friend consider whether the arrangements for the broadcasting on our television screens of self-confessed terrorists and supporters of mass murderers should be revised?

The Prime Minister: Many people felt that the incident to which my hon. Friend refers stretched the present guidelines to the limit and perhaps beyond. That is a matter that perhaps we should examine.

Mr. John Smith: Does the Prime Minister agree that, while it must be right for both parents to contribute properly to the maintenance of their children, the Child Support Agency is causing widespread anxiety and dismay by imposing a rigid and inflexible financial formula that often ignores the realities of people's lives? Will he institute an immediate review of the operation of the Child Support Act 1991?

The Prime Minister: The whole House recognises the need for both parents to contribute to the bringing up of their children—that is not a point of dispute between myself and the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The purpose of the Child Support Agency is to ensure that fathers who desert their children face up to their responsibilities. I know of the concerns that have been raised about that matter and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security is examining them.

Mr. John Smith: Will the right hon. Gentleman ensure that, in any examination of the system, account is taken of the fact that the formula appears to disregard a property settlement, which provides a home for children, and also the cost of exercising access? Should not those factors, at the least, be taken into account and will they be encompassed in any further considerations of the operation of the Child Support Act?

The Prime Minister: There are a number of matters to be considered, including the maintenance formula to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman refers. My right hon. Friend is aware, as I indicated a moment ago, of the concerns that have been raised and he will examine them.

Mr. John Smith: If further consideration is to be given, will the right hon. Gentleman look into what appears to be another possible fault in the system? Is it right that out of the £530 million that the agency is to raise in its first year, £480 million should go to the Treasury and only £50 million to the benefit of children? While recognising, of course, the legitimate interest of the taxpayer, does not that show a lack of balance in what is supposed to be a Child Support Act?

The Prime Minister: The right hon. and learned Gentleman knows that the main purpose of the Child Support Agency is to ensure that assistance is given by both parents towards their children. That is the purpose of the agency and that will continue to be its purpose in the future.

Mr. Lidington: In view of this morning's press comments about the attitude of Her Majesty's Government towards possible payments from the European social fund, will my right hon. Friend take the opportunity to make the Government's position clear?

The Prime Minister: I have seen suggestions in the press in recent weeks that sums due from the social fund would not be paid. Those reports are misguided. It is my expectation that the £300 million figure that has been mentioned in those press reports will be taken up by authorities within the calendar year.

Q2. **Mr. Hoyle:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 2 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Hoyle: Is the Prime Minister aware that the imposition of a guillotine on the Railways Bill is an affront to democracy—*[Interruption.]*—which has caused disquiet not only on Opposition Benches, but on his Benches, too, because it will curtail discussion of vital subjects such as pensions, railcards, and British Rail's bid for franchises? Does not he realise that it will be seen by the public as a cheap, gerrymandering attempt to get an unpopular measure, which was introduced by his Government, through the House when it could have been debated fully in the two weeks up to the Queen's Speech?

The Prime Minister: The hon. Gentleman has been a Member of the House for a long time and I congratulate him on keeping a straight face while he asked that question. When the arrangements for consideration of Lords amendments to the Railways Bill were announced, no one suggested that the two days proposed were insufficient. The majority of the amendments that have been brought

from another place are uncontroversial, many of them demonstrate the Government's positive responses to the points made in the Lords and all aspects of the proposals have been discussed exhaustively at all stages.

The hon. Gentleman neglected to mention that so far there have been more than 186 hours of debate, including 130 hours in this House alone—hardly a negation of democracy.

Q3. **Mr. Brandreth:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 2 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Brandreth: May I thank my right hon. Friend for his personal involvement in encouraging the Maryland bank of North America to bring its European headquarters to the city of Chester and with it the prospect of 1,000 new jobs for my constituents? Does my right hon. Friend agree that employment and employment prospects must now go to the top of the European agenda and that the British approach gets the right results—less regulation means more jobs?

The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend is entirely right about the relationship between regulation and jobs. The greater the extent to which we can reduce both regulation from Brussels and domestic regulation, the greater will be the likelihood of increasing the number of jobs in the United Kingdom. I am delighted at the excellent news from Chester and I congratulate my hon. Friend and my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Employment and the Ministry for Industry on their part in obtaining that institution.

Mr. Galloway: Will the Prime Minister find time today to call for the court reports referred to in early-day motion 2534, standing in my name and that of other hon. Members, on the torture of a British citizen, Sulaiman Al-Adsani, by Sheikh Jabar Al-Sabah, a member of the Kuwaiti royal house? That matter is now to go before the courts in Kuwait. The torture, which consisted of the burning of 25 per cent. of the body of that British citizen and of his being held repeatedly under water in a swimming pool that was floating with dead bodies and being pistol-whipped and brutally beaten, is a serious matter. Given that the Al-Sabah family business was reinstated to power at the point of British arms and at much British sacrifice, does the Prime Minister think that it would be a worthwhile subject of discussion between him and the Government of Kuwait?

The Prime Minister: My understanding is that the matter is being dealt with by the courts of Kuwait, but in the light of what the hon. Gentleman has said, I shall look at the information available to us.

Q4. **Mr. Hawkins:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 2 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Hawkins: May I congratulate my right hon. Friend on his desire to get back to basics in education? Does he agree that it is essential to keep A-levels as a beacon of excellence at the top of secondary education, to concentrate on reading and writing in primary schools and to ensure that there is strong discipline in schools?

The Prime Minister: I want to see us get back to basics in education, as in other subjects. We want to hear a good deal more of common sense and traditional values and rather less of the fashionable views that have so often offended parents and damaged education. I know that many teachers are concerned about the problem of discipline in schools and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education wishes to discuss with teachers what action can be taken.

Mr. Stevenson: In view of the collapse of the Government's policy on law and order, which has led to rocketing crime figures and equally record prison populations, does the Prime Minister agree with Mr. Derek Lewis that a return to that Victorian value, the prison ship, would be regrettable?

The Prime Minister: There is an internal contradiction in the hon. Gentleman's question. If he is right and our policy has collapsed, we would not be catching villains and our prisons would not be crowded. He should listen to what the chairman of the Police Federation said just eight days ago:

"There has been a lot of comment about prison in the last few days . . . One fact is clear. Society must be protected from the small but vociferous minority who put two fingers up to the criminal justice system. They are cautioned or bailed simply to be let out again and to reoffend and reoffend again . . . . These criminals should be behind bars. By locking them up they will be unable to ruin other people's lives."

Those are my views as well.

Q6. **Sir Peter Tapsell:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 2 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Sir Peter Tapsell: May I urge my right hon. Friend to be sceptical about the siren voices predictably suggesting to him and the Chancellor of the Exchequer that a major contribution can be made towards reducing the public sector borrowing requirement by relying on the future growth of our economy? That is the fairy gold school of economics, greatly beloved by Opposition politicians all over the world. Does he agree that it is important that, on Budget day, it should be seen that we are making an immediate, substantial and steady movement towards a reduction of our fiscal deficit?

The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend is entirely right about the need to make a steady and consistent move to reduce our fiscal deficit. We have been looking at the range of Government expenditure to find out whether it is necessary; if it is, whether it is being spent effectively; and whether there is waste that we can cut. Those are propositions behind which all my right hon. and hon. Friends can unite, in stark contrast to the Opposition, who would throw taxpayers' money at every problem. There will be a series of ways to reduce the fiscal deficit: withholding public expenditure is one; and growth and other factors will make a contribution.

Q7. **Mr. O'Hara:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 2 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. O'Hara: Yesterday in the House, the Government failed to refute a figure in a Department of Transport

working paper of £1·15 billion extra subsidy that would be needed for British Rail after privatisation. That is considerably in excess of the sum that would be raised were VAT imposed on domestic fuel bills at a rate of 8 per cent. next year. Will the Prime Minister apologise to pensioners who will be shivering through next winter when he tells them that they will be contributing to the placing of not one more train on our rail tracks or one more passenger on those trains, but to a semblance of profitability in a sham of privatised railways?

The Prime Minister: The hon. Gentleman is talking total nonsense, as the House will have expected of him. We have made it clear on a number of occasions that we are looking at assistance to help vulnerable people with their heating costs during the winter. I remind the hon. Gentleman that matters such as special cold weather payments were never raised, provided or thought about by previous Governments.

Hare Coursing (No. 2)

3.30 pm

Mr. Colin Pickthall (Lancashire, West): I beg to move,

That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make hare coursing illegal; to prohibit the use of any place for or in connection with hare coursing; to provide for the confiscation of any animal or equipment used or to be used for or in connection with hare coursing; and for connected purposes.

My constituency of West Lancashire has much to be proud of, but it is not proud of the fact that it hosts the Waterloo cup, which coursers tell me is the blue riband of hare coursing.

The overwhelming majority of people in West Lancashire feel nothing but revulsion for that cruel sport, and I am glad to say that attempts to end it have attracted all-party support. That was particularly the case when the district council passed a Labour resolution to create a byelaw banning the sport in the district, which attracted support from the Conservatives. The Home Office has blocked that byelaw on grounds which I can describe only as spurious. One of the Labour councillors concerned in that vote, Andrew Johnson, represents the parish that hosts, unwillingly, the Waterloo cup, and he is present in the Gallery today. He has earned widespread support in his village for his opposition to that unpleasant activity.

Alas, many obnoxious blood sports remain in this country, but none is more detested than hare coursing. For those hon. Members who know little of it, it consists of beaters driving hares on to a large course. The hares bolt for the long grass past a dog handler who unleashes two hounds, and the dogs seek to catch and kill the hares. Points are awarded for the dexterity of the hounds in turning the hares but, of course, the fundamental aim is the killing of the hares, which, when caught, are torn to pieces.

On one side of the course are assembled the Range Rover and hamper types, and on the other side on a mound are to be found the men with a crate of lager under each arm. The consumption of the lager leads to ever more ugly demands for more killing. To a large extent, the amount of killing can be controlled by the point at which the handler releases the dogs.

Hare coursing is the last legal spectator blood sport—rather than a spectator sport—in this country. It should follow bear baiting, dog fighting, cock fighting and bull baiting into the history books as a horror that civilised men and women have discarded.

The last Waterloo cup meeting in the spring was attended by me and by my hon. Friends the Members for Glanford and Scunthorpe (Mr. Morley), for Knowsley, South (Mr. O'Hara) and for Wigan (Mr. Stott). We spent about two hours there, during which time there were no kills. There had been kills before we arrived and there were more after we left. Towards the end of our visit, the lager mound was beginning to get obvious in its demands for more blood.

In fairness, I must tell the House that the organisers of the event treated us with extreme courtesy. Mr. Mark Prescott, the organiser, explained his enthusiasm for the sport with great plausibility, not to say charm. He would, wouldn't he? The basis of his defence, like that of all those who are involved in this so-called sport, is, first, the long, distinguished and interesting history of hare coursing; secondly, the income that it provides for some landowners and some temporary beaters; thirdly, that it is a celebration of the skills of the hares as well as the dogs; and fourthly, that most hares get away.

Many barbaric practices have long and interesting histories, and they include cruelties inflicted on human beings that some Conservative Members would be all too anxious to restore. To say that an abuse of our responsibilities as human beings has a long history cannot justify its continuation. To quote employment as justification is feeble, and such employment should also include the large numbers of policemen who turn out to keep the peace at an event that naturally gives rise to strong feelings. I spoke to the police on duty at the Waterloo cup event. They felt as much distaste for the sport as everyone else, and expressed the wish that they would no longer have to police the affair.

The policy of the League Against Cruel Sports to demonstrate and protest with restraint has meant that there are few significant clashes at the Waterloo cup. The only arrest that I saw was of a drunken hare coursing enthusiast who launched himself at the protesters and was hauled down by the constables.

To celebrate the skills of a beautiful wild animal by dying to see it pulled to shreds is the height of hypocrisy. The excuse that most hares get away is equivalent to saying that most people are not murdered and that therefore murderers's activities should not be stopped.

Government-sponsored research shows that the hare population is in serious decline. The total for the United Kingdom is estimated at 900,000. Some areas, such as parts of East Anglia, are denuded of hares so that they can be transported to Altcar. The species is not a pest, and is already under stress from agricultural change.

It is important to appreciate the close relationship between legal and illegal hare coursing. At the 1990 Waterloo cup, 15 gangs of illegal coursers were arrested in adjacent fields. The best on offer from the law to check this activity was a £40 fine for trespass. Many hon. Members have good reason to support action against unofficial hare coursing, which is often conducted through threats to farmers, gamekeepers and landowners. The National Farmers Union and the police are on record as seeking to outlaw the activity.

I have press cuttings giving accounts of such activities in Wistaston near Crewe, in Aldborough, Salisbury plain, near Newmarket and near Peterborough. In Upholland in my constituency, a seven-year-old girl saw hares torn apart by lurchers close to her home twice in one day. I do not think that Laura Horrocks will every forget that experience.

I am told that illegal coursing is sometimes videotaped and videos are run in pubs for betting purposes—a macabre race night. How can we expect illegal coursing to be curbed by the law when legal coursing is still sanctioned by the House? I had a brief quote from a blood sport journal, but I have lost it somewhere. It said that, if legal hare coursing is abolished, illegal hare coursing will follow as sure as night follows day—and a good thing too.

Hare coursing cannot be defended as part of a traditional country pursuit, especially as few of its proponents are traditional people. Nor can it be defended on the grounds of freedom. The freedom to be barbaric, to be a killer and to rejoice in the spilling of blood for its own sake is a freedom that we allow at the peril of our civilisation.

Question put and agreed to.

[Mr. Colin Pickthall]

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Colin Pickthall, Mrs. Janet Anderson, Mr. Tony Banks, Mr. Andrew Bowden, Mr. Harry Cohen, Mrs. Jean Corston, Mr. Ron Davies, Mr. Neil Gerrard, Mr. Mike Hall, Mr. Elliot Morley, Mr. Edward O'Hara and Mr. Roger Stott.

HARE COURSING (No. 2)

Mr. Colin Pickthall accordingly presented a Bill to make hare coursing illegal; to prohibit the use of any place for or in connection with hare coursing; to provide for the confiscation of any animal or equipment used or to be used for or in connection with hare coursing; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon Friday 5 November, and to be printed. [Bill 263.]

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. We have just heard ten-minute rule Bill on a subject which used to cause maximum controversy and opposition. You will have noticed that, after my hon. Friend's excellent remarks, there was no opposition whatsoever to the measure. It no longer seems to be a controversial subject. No Conservative Member stood up and opposed it, which would have been the case previously. In view of the fact that there is no opposition to the Bill, is there any way in which we can make parliamentary progress, for all the excellent and valued reasons my hon. Friend put forward?

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member knows that he must pursue that matter with the Leader of the House and through the usual channels.

Orders of the Day

Railways Bill (Allocation of Time)

3.42 pm

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. John MacGregor): I beg to move,

That the following provisions shall apply to the remaining proceedings on the Railways Bill:

LORDS AMENDMENTS

1. The proceedings on further Consideration of Lords Amendments shall be completed at this day's sitting and, if not previously brought to a conclusion, shall be brought to a conclusion five hours after the commencement of the adjourned proceedings.

2.—(1) For the purpose of bringing any proceedings to a conclusion in accordance with paragraph 1 above—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided and, if that Question is for the amendment of a Lords Amendment, shall then put forthwith the Question on any further Amendment of the said Lords Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown and on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in the said Lords Amendment or, as the case may be, in the said Lords Amendment as amended;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining Lords Amendments as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown to a Lords Amendment and then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in their Amendment, or as the case may be, in their Amendment as amended;

(ii) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in a Lords Amendment;

(iii) put forthwith, with respect to all of the Amendments designated by the Speaker which have not been disposed of, the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in those Amendments; and

(iv) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Amendments;

(c) as soon as the House has agreed or disagreed with the Lords in any of their Amendments, or disposed of an Amendment relevant to a Lords Amendment which has been disagreed to, the Speaker shall put forthwith a separate Question on any other Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown relevant to that Lords Amendment.

(2) Proceedings under this paragraph shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

STAGES SUBSEQUENT TO FIRST CONSIDERATION OF LORDS AMENDMENTS

3.—(1) The proceedings on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill shall be brought to a conclusion one hour after their commencement.

(2) For the purpose of bringing those proceedings to a conclusion—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided, and shall then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown which is related to the Question already proposed from the Chair;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining items in the Lords Message as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown on any item;

(ii) in the case of each remaining item designated by the Speaker, put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Proposal; and

(iii) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Proposals.

(3) Proceedings under this paragraph shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

SUPPLEMENTAL

4.—(1) The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown—

(a) for the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons; or

(b) for the consideration forthwith of any further Message from the Lords on the Bill.

(2) A Committee appointed to draw up Reasons shall report before the conclusion of the sitting at which it is appointed.

5.—(1) In this paragraph "the proceedings" means proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments, on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill, on the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons and the Report of such a Committee.

(2) Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to the proceedings.

(3) No dilatory Motion with respect to, or in the course of, the proceedings shall be made except by a Minister of the Crown, and the Question on any such Motion shall be put forthwith.

(4) If the House is adjourned, or the sitting is suspended, before the expiry of the period at the end of which any proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion under this Order, no notice shall be required of a Motion made at the next sitting by a Minister of the Crown for varying or supplementing the provisions of this Order.

(5) If the proceedings on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill are interrupted by a Motion for the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 20 (Adjournment on specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration) a period equal to the duration of the proceedings on the Motion shall be added to the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion.

The case for the motion can be put simply and briefly. There are four good reasons.

First, the Bill has had ample time for debate—about 185 hours before yesterday's proceedings—when all the issues have been exhaustively discussed. That is a great deal of time for every issue to be tackled, so no one can argue that both Houses have had insufficient time to consider the Bill. Quite the reverse: a huge amount of parliamentary time has been devoted to it.

Secondly, all but two of the Lords amendments are either in response to commitments given to hon. Members on both sides of the House and in another place, or they are technical. Indeed, some 75 per cent. of the amendments are technical and do not introduce any real policy issues, or they are consequential. A very large number simply flow from the commitments that have been made.

It is noteworthy that only a small proportion of the time spent on the Bill in another place was spent on the Government amendments that we are considering today. They were all passed in another place without a Division. They were unopposed by the Opposition in another place, with one exception.

The vast majority—indeed, all but two—of the amendments that we are considering in these two days are in response to commitments or are technical. They took very little time in the House of Lords and were not opposed there.

Thirdly, we are fundamentally concerned with two issues, as my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) said last night. One concerns pensions—the exception to which I referred—and the other British Rail being allowed to bid for franchises. We had provided the House with generous time—two whole days—to consider those issues and the other technical amendments that took so little time in the other place. It should have been perfectly possible to deal with those issues as fully as was required—as, indeed, is still possible under this motion.

It is interesting to note that the other place took about three and a half hours on the two issues; we still have five hours ahead of us to debate them, and we could have spent a great deal of time on them yesterday. In addition, the House had already debated them fully before the Bill left here to go to the other place. We are talking about two amendments that have been very fully and widely debated in the other place in less time than we are now making available at this stage of our proceedings. It is quite clear that we have already provided generous time.

Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody (Crewe and Nantwich): Can the Minister tell us of any other Bill of which a very substantial part of the provisions were introduced by a Minister saying, "Although the wording is not clear, it is obvious that it will be tested in the courts"?

Mr. MacGregor: There are many cases where Acts of Parliament involve interpretation by the courts. It happens frequently. I note that the hon. Lady has not challenged any of the three points that I have made so far, yet those are important points in the context of the debate.

My fourth point is that the fact that we have provided plenty of time was acknowledged when no hon. Member questioned the time allocation announced by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House during the business statement last week. That is a crucial point, because it is quite clear that the House understood all the points that I have just made and decided that the time provided for our debate this week was sufficient to deal with all the issues.

Dr. John Marek (Wrexham): I want to make two points to the right hon. Gentleman. First, the Bill has been substantially rewritten. His argument is that, although it has been modified, the principle is not different. That may be so, but the House examines Bills line by line and goes into the detail. Therefore, the argument that the Bill is not substantially different in principle, apart from two issues that have been well debated in the other place, does not carry much water.

Secondly, the other place has sent back those two issues to the House of Commons and is telling us to think again, so they should be fully debated. I am afraid that I cannot agree with what the right hon. Gentleman has said.

Mr. MacGregor: We have provided plenty of time for those two issues to be debated—indeed, more time than we provided when we considered them on Report on 25 May. We did not have a guillotine on 25 May, but the House decided that two and a half hours of debate was sufficient time, and then took a vote. The hon. Gentleman's point fails on that fact alone. If his view is really as he stated, I am surprised that he did not communicate it to his right hon. and hon. Friends last Thursday or raise the matter in the House. The truth is that, last Thursday, my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House said that two full days had been allocated to debate these issues, and the House thought that that was ample.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Is the right hon. Gentleman saying that when two days are allocated to debate a Bill that has been to the other place and where new material is involved—and although the measure is controversial and the job of the Opposition is to oppose and to use all the techniques available to do so—it is wrong of the Opposition to assume that the debate will continue beyond 10 o'clock so that the Opposition can harry the Government? Surely that is the role of the Opposition.

The Government know that 80 per cent. of the British public do not want the Bill—*[Interruption.]* That is true. Our assumption was that two days meant many more hours of debate than being obliged to finish at 10 o'clock on two successive days. I was under the impression that we would spend all night opposing the Bill line by line, clause by clause, to try to prevent it being passed—in line with the wishes of millions of people.

Mr. MacGregor: The hon. Gentleman has given the game away. He said that the Opposition would use every technique available to make sure that the Bill never reached the statute book. That is not the stage that we are at——

Mr. Skinner: It is the Opposition's job to oppose.

Mr. MacGregor: Exactly, but if the hon. Gentleman believes that the Opposition can use every technique without being challenged, he must understand that the Government have the legitimate role of ensuring that amendments are properly considered and that the Bill reaches the statute book. The hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) has blown the gaff. He has told us exactly what the Opposition are about.

Until yesterday, we had every reason to believe that we could deal with all the issues in an orderly and reasonable manner. We saw what happened, and the hon. Gentleman explained the thinking behind it. There was an attempt to use the techniques of the House to prevent the Bill from going through. I hope that all my right hon. and hon. Friends now understand exactly what was happening.

Mr. Skinner *rose*——

Mr. MacGregor: As I am not too naive in these matters, I will spell it out to the hon. Member for Bolsover, but I will allow him to make another point first.

Mr. Skinner: Every text book on parliamentary government and the role of the Opposition indicates that the only power held by the Opposition to stop a ruthless and arrogant Government from enacting measures that the majority of the population do not want is to use the availability of parliamentary time. The Secretary of State is saying that, for the past 14 years, the Government have been so contemptuous of the people and of arguments that, every time that there is opposition, they introduce a guillotine to have their way and to get their legislation through. That says more about this Government than about Oppositions generally in the past.

Mr. MacGregor: I recall, when I was fairly new to the House, having to suffer five guillotines in one day from the hon. Gentleman's party when it was in government. The amount of time allowed must be reasonable; it cannot be unlimited. We have already spent more than 185 hours examining the Bill in great detail.

Yesterday, we saw a classic filibuster. Anyone who has been a Member of Parliament for even a short time could spot what the Opposition were up to a mile away. We had nearly five hours——

Mr. Skinner: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. The Secretary of State says that the House was subjected to a filibuster by my right hon. and hon. Friends. Did you, Madam Speaker, have to prevent any right hon. or hon. Member speaking because he or she was filibustering? You should put him in his place.

Madam Speaker: Order. That matter is for debate and argument, not for the Chair. I know well what took place yesterday. Any right hon. or hon. Member who wants to do so can check the time taken by any speaker.

Mr. MacGregor: What we are doing now is also in order. I will take the House through it. Yesterday, nearly five hours were spent debating two amendments——

Mr. John Heppell (Nottingham, East): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Mr. MacGregor: No, I will not give way for the moment. Nearly five hours were spent debating two groups of amendments.

Mr. Heppell *rose*——

Mr. MacGregor: This is totally typical of the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Heppell: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. The fact is that the House dealt with 128 amendments yesterday. The right hon. Gentleman is misleading the House——

Madam Speaker: Order. I am sure that the hon. Gentleman knows that no right hon. or hon. Member misleads the House. That is not a point of order for the Chair but a matter of argument. I understand the hon. Gentleman's frustration, because he has not been allowed to intervene—but if he will be a little patient, perhaps the Secretary of State will allow him to do so later.

Mr. MacGregor: We want to get on to the points of substance, but it is obvious what the Opposition are up to. They are not allowing me to get on with the argument and are clearly keen to filibuster this debate as well.

I acknowledge that we debated two groups of amendments yesterday. It is typical of the hon. Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell) that he picks up on points of trivia and delivers great tirades on them, but he never addresses the major issues.

Mr. David Nicholson (Taunton): My right hon. Friend will know of my interest in and concern about the more controversial Lords amendments. Does he agree that it would not have made sense to debate, for example, the so-called Peyton amendment on BR bids at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, and that it was far better to debate those matters in prime time, which we would have hoped the Opposition would allow? Is not the real reason the fact that the Opposition were denied the possibility of a Conservative rebellion by the skill of the Secretary of State and of some of my hon. Friends and the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) wanted an opportunity to prove his virility to the left of the Labour party, having possibly sacrificed it at the Labour party conference?

Mr. MacGregor: I agree with everything that my hon. Friend said.

Mr. John Prescott (Kingston upon Hull, East): Look at what the pensioners are going to lose.

Mr. MacGregor: From a sedentary position, the hon. Gentleman says, "Look at what the pensioners are going to lose." He repeats that allegation around the country, but it is not true, as I shall make clear in a moment. It is time that he stopped repeating that accusation, because it is not true.

Mr. Brian Wilson (Cunninghame, North): The Secretary of State pays lip service to the desire to get on with the debate, but we are anxious to get on to its substance and, above all, to the issue of pensioners. Instead of taking part in a cheapskate exercise, let the Secretary of State address himself to the views of the chairman of the British Rail pension fund. Before the summer recess, he said that he was satisfied with assurances that he had been given, but he is now calling on the Government in specific terms to stop reneging on their assurances. He has accused them of reneging on assurances given in another place and coming back to the House with amendments to reverse the Lords amendments.

Let the Secretary of State address himself to those views and to the genuine concerns of hundreds of thousands of British Rail pensioners rather than getting involved in this game of farce and semantics. The Government are interested only in curtailing debate, because they know that the more debate there is, the more they lose the argument.

Mr. MacGregor: The hon. Gentleman is not right. I shall return to pensions, which I regard as a serious issue. I wish that we could have spent time on it yesteday, but I shall say something about it in a moment. I need to make the argument for the motion. Instead of interrupting all the time and accusing me of not getting on with the debate, the hon. Gentleman might allow me to do so.

I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Taunton (Mr. Nicholson), who said——

Mr. Wilson: The idiot.

Mr. MacGregor: That type of comment gets us nowhere, and it is typical of the hon. Gentleman.

I remember the debates of the Select Committee on the Sittings of the House, which was chaired by my right hon. Friend the Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Jopling). It was responding to public concern about the way in which we sometimes debate matters at 3 am. My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House has provided ample time to debate the two key issues at appropriate times during the parliamentary day.

I noticed that the Opposition got very shirty and wanted to interrupt to stop me making my argument on how the filibustering occurred. Nearly five hours were spent on the two groups of amendments—much longer than the Lords took on those two issues. The delays occurred because we were treated to a series of Second Reading speeches and constant repetition of arguments that had been made ad nauseam in earlier debates.

Mrs. Dunwoody: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I detect in the Secretary of State's remarks clear criticism of the Chair's handling of amendments yesterday. I am sure that, had any hon. Member contravened the rules of order, the occupant of the Chair would have called the Member to order. Should it not be made clear to the Secretary of State that the constant use of the word "filibuster" is not only inaccurate but unbecoming in a senior Minister?

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): I did not notice any criticism of the Chair. I am sure that the hon. Lady is right and that the occupant of the Chair would have acted in accordance with the Standing Orders of the House and carried out his or her duty.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Is it not the case that the Standing Orders of the House prevent tedious repetition? The Secretary of State has just accused the Opposition of numerous repetitions, but that cannot be true because it would be in breach of the Standing Orders.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Gentleman is right, but it is for the Chair to decide what is tedious repetition, and the Chair has not yet so decided.

Mr. MacGregor: We can see how sensitive the Opposition are to the point that I am making. I am not directing any accusations at the Chair; I am saying that the Opposition spokesman had his team lined up—the tactics were all too obvious—to use every argument they could think of to delay debate on the amendments. That is why so many points made in earlier debates were repeated yesterday.

Let us listen to some of the arguments to which we were treated——

Mr. Matthew Banks (Southport) *rose*——

Mr. MacGregor: No, I shall not give way; I must get on.

Despite the fact that everyone was anxious to move on to the key debates and that the House of Lords had spent very little time on the two groups of amendments that we debated yesterday, we were treated to speeches about the sale of drinks at Birmingham New Street station, the opening hours of toilets at Birmingham New Street station, and all stations to Dundee, Broughty Ferry, Monifieth, Carnoustie and Arbroath. I am not saying that such issues, as well as the Eastleigh works, are not important, but they were not relevant to the amendments being considered yesterday. We heard about the nicknames of pre-grouping railway counties, the sale of knickers on stations and various other issues which were included to prolong the debate. That was not an orderly way in which to conduct the debate.

The game was given away when we completed the vote on the second group of amendments at about 9.30 pm. We were deciding how to handle the obvious filibuster, but the game was given away when the Opposition spent hardly any time on the next group of amendments. We all understood what was happening. The Opposition dug a hole for themselves and they were rumbled. Last night we saw blatantly obvious spoiling tactics.

When he made the business statement, my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House pointed out that, at yesterday's rate of progress, we should have needed a further four weeks to complete consideration of the amendments. That is the reason we had to ensure an orderly debate. If we had not, we would have ended up with a further four weeks of debate—or, as the hon. Member for Bolsover rightly said, a debate long enough to ensure that the Bill did not reach the statute book.

[Mr. MacGregor]

Last night, the Opposition employed deliberate spoiling tactics and displayed spurious, wholly synthetic rage. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made that clear during Prime Minister's Question Time. I watched him doing so on television, and he was absolutely right.

Mr. Peter Snape (West Bromwich, East): I am a former railwayman; indeed, I suspect that I am the only hon. Member who hopes to live long enough to draw a railway pension. However, will the Secretary of State accept that many of my colleagues also feel strongly about these matters—so much so that we were considerably annoyed yesterday by the indifference of Conservative Back Benchers, the vast majority of whom, in spite of their support for the Government today, were not in the Chamber for any part of yesterday's debate? Will he accept that those of us who feel strongly about the future of the railway industry have a right to raise the issues that he mentioned so scornfully and that we shall continue to do so today, as long as the Chair rules that we are in order?

Mr. MacGregor: My hon. Friends believed that the two groups of amendments were right, and they did not want to hold up the discussion. That was a perfectly sensible way to proceed.

Mr. Matthew Banks: Does my right hon. Friend agree that what confirms more than anything else the synthetic nature of the Opposition's outrage is the fact that, with the honourable exception of the hon. Member for Wrexham (Dr. Marek)—I see that he is in his place—none of the Opposition Members who both yesterday and today have expressed mock outrage about the guillotine were present in the Chamber for the debates on any of the amendments?

Mr. George Stevenson (Stoke-on-Trent, South): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I seek your guidance, because what has just been said is not correct. I was in the Chamber throughout the debates but I did not contribute to them, and that is what is misleading the House. *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sure that, if the hon. Member for Southport (Mr. Banks) is wrong, he will want to withdraw what he has said. [HON. MEMBERS: "Withdraw."] Order. It is time that the House settled down to a serious debate.

Mr. MacGregor: I hope that I have made the case. Indeed, the case for ensuring that there is an orderly debate on the issues of most concern to people outside the House is being made for me by the minute.

As a result of all that I have explained, and especially as a result of what we observed yesterday, the Government believe that a timetable motion is necessary to ensure orderly debate for the remainder of our time on the Bill. I am sure that we can achieve that.

I shall now deal with the two key issues. The first is the question of British Rail bidding for the franchises, and the hon. Member for Wrexham told us last night—his words are recorded at column 123 of the *Official Report*—that the Opposition were prepared to accept formally the amendments that we were debating at 10 o'clock. That means that we can go straight into the debate on the group including amendment No. 31, which is about British Rail bidding.

I can therefore give my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) the assurance that he sought last night, that there will be ample time to debate that issue. Indeed, there will be more than ample time. On Report on 25 May, a two-and-a-half hour debate on that issue, when the Opposition amendment was defeated, was considered long enough. The House of Lords, too, took two and a half hours on the issue. So we have plenty of time today.

I know that Opposition Members and some of my hon. Friends wish to discuss pensions—briefly, in the case of my hon. Friends, because more than 30 hours have already been devoted to the subject, and we have now come down to a fairly narrow issue. The background to the debate is the fact that we have always made clear our belief that it is important that the position of existing pensioners—that is what we are to discuss today—should be fully taken into account and dealt with satisfactorily.

I have said that throughout our proceedings. My right hon. Friend the Minister of State and I have engaged in lengthy discussions with pensioners and pension fund trustees, because I fully understand, accept and sympathise with the pensioners' views, and I was determined to ensure that they had a good deal. They can now be assured that they have a very good deal indeed.

It is outrageous that the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) has misrepresented the position of pensioners and of the pension fund so outrageously. He knows that there is no ground whatever for saying that the Treasury is out to purloin the existing pension funds. For him to suggest that is not only outrageous but frightening an awful lot of pensioners unnecessarily. Let me spell the position out.

Ms Glenda Jackson (Hampstead and Highgate): Will the Secretary of State give way?

Mr. MacGregor: No, I want to spell the position out.

For existing and deferred pensioners, we are setting up a closed scheme with its own fund within the joint industry scheme. The assets going from the existing British Rail scheme to that fund will be actuarially determined. The fund will, as now, be under the control of the trustees, who will have the same fiduciary duties to members as they have now.

We have added the protection of a guarantee, fully underwritten by the Government, that the fund will remain solvent. That means that pensions paid are certain to keep pace with inflation. That is an absolute guarantee, which pensioners do not at present enjoy. In addition, the trustees will be able to use up to 40 per cent. of any surplus in the fund—the likelihood of such surpluses occurring is real rather than theoretical—to enhance benefits above the level of inflation. Incidentally, 40 per cent. is broadly the figure that pensioners have been getting on actuarial surpluses up until now.

Three things have been guaranteed to the pensioners—the solvency of the fund, the index-linking of pensions, and 40 per cent. of any surpluses—which they will be able to have for as long as they have pensions. That is an extremely favourable deal. It is a fairly good deal by the standards of any pension scheme. It is a copper-bottomed guarantee of inflation-proofing, plus the ability to share in the surpluses. It is a more certain deal than pensioners have now.

That is the context in which the House should address the question of Government payments to the scheme under the Transport Act 1980.

Mr. Heppell: The Secretary of State says that there will be a guarantee of about 40 per cent. of the surpluses in my pension scheme. Can he tell us what will happen to the other 60 per cent. of the surpluses in my pension scheme?

Mr. MacGregor: Those surpluses will stay in the fund, because there will be a continuing commitment to inflation-proofing and the payment of surpluses in the future. If the surpluses are insufficient, and if the fund is unable to make the payments, clearly the Government's commitment comes in and the taxpayer assists.

Mr. Heppell: To clear up that point, the Secretary of State says that 60 per cent. will stay in the fund. I understand that it will stay with the Government and they will give it to the fund when necessary. Can the Secretary of State give a commitment now that the payments that will be made to pensioners—the Government's contributions —will continue without any conditions?

Mr. MacGregor: I repeat what I said: the 60 per cent. stays in the fund, without any conditions. The issue is when the extra funding from the taxpayer comes in. That is the issue which I want to spell out now. *[Interruption.]* The answer is yes: the 60 per cent. stays in the fund.

Mr. Prescott: The Secretary of State admitted that 60 per cent. will be kept in a reserve fund and 40 per cent. will be distributed to pensioners in the normal manner. I understand that 60 per cent. will remain in the fund but not for distribution, as it is now. At present, any surpluses made from the investments are distributed on the decision of the trustees. The Secretary of State is now saying that that will apply to only 40 per cent. of the surpluses, and 60 per cent. will be put into a reserve fund. Perhaps he could tell us why he is appointing a special Government trustee who will have some special responsibilities to the fund.

Mr. MacGregor: Let me deal with the two points. What I said is absolutely clear and in accordance with what has been happening up until now in the British Rail fund and, indeed, any other funds. There is a clear reason why the surpluses stay in the fund. *[Interruption.]* Putting the surpluses into reserve for the fund is the same thing as the surpluses staying in the fund. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman misunderstood that. I have made it clear that the surpluses stay in the fund.

Until now, about 40 per cent. has been paid out in most cases in the British Rail fund. Clearly, when the trustees face their future commitments, and when they know that there are liabilities for the employer, the 60 per cent. is dealt with in that way. What we will have is a closed fund. Therefore, we have said that 40 per cent. can be distributed in the way that the trustees see fit. That is a very good deal, because it is in accordance with the way in which pension funds operate.

The taxpayer, rather than future employees or employers, is underwriting the fund, because we want to give the pensioners a fair deal. If we suppose that the fund does not perform very well at some stage in the future, if the 60 per cent. is absorbed in paying out index-linked pensions and the 40 per cent. commitment, and if the fund runs into deficit, the taxpayer will step in and meet its commitment at that point. It must be clear to the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East now.

There is no question whatever of the Treasury or the Government purloining pensioners' funds, and I hope that the hon. Gentleman will stop saying that.

Mr. Andrew Smith (Oxford, East): The Secretary of State says that the 60 per cent. will remain in the fund. In the memorandum that his Minister signed, it says that the Government director will decide on the investment of the special reserve. If the 60 per cent. stays in the fund in the normal way, as it has in the past, surely the fund trustees will decide on the investments of the fund. Will the Minister guarantee that it will be the pension fund trustees and not the Government commissar who will control the 60 per cent. special reserve?

Mr. MacGregor: Will the hon. Gentleman put himself in the place of the taxpayer? We have a commitment to the taxpayer, and if the taxpayer is underwriting the solvency of the fund and, effectively, the index-linking, there must be some assurance that it is the 40 per cent. and not the 60 per cent. that is distributed in pension benefits of one form or another. That is why there must be some special reserve power to protect the taxpayer, who will be putting in further funding. There is no queston of siphoning off those funds for the other purposes that the hon. Gentleman keeps talking about.

The issue before the House today is the context in which it should address the question of Government payments to the scheme under the Transport Act 1980. At present, such payments are made each year to fund liabilities which would otherwise be unfunded. In a closed fund, with an absolute solvency guarantee from the Government, the situation is different. The trustees acknowledged this when their chairman signed the memorandum of understanding in the summer, which explicitly recognised the need to look again at the timing of those payments and to

"take account on the absolute guarantee now being provided".

The absolute guarantee is a very significant change. The Government's proposal will ensure that the full value of the payments and the interest on them become assets of the pensioners' closed fund and will be counted in the overall calculation of the balance in the fund.

Let me make it clear beyond doubt that they will count as assets, and the fund will get the full value of the contributions. If there is a surplus to be distributed, counting in those assets, pensioners get that value in real money.

Mr. Andrew Smith: How can you invest in an IOU?

Mr. MacGregor: I have already said that there will be rolled-up interest on the payments which will be included in the value.

Under the changed arrangements and the Government guarantee, the point at which a cash injection of Government money into the fund is needed will not necessarily be every year, as it is now. That is why we want to discuss the timing of payments with the trustees. They implicitly recognised the reasonableness of that proposal when they signed the memorandum.

It remains the Government's firm intention to honour the memorandum of understanding and to reach an agreement with the trustees, as I am confident we can. We are in detailed discussions with them, but these are very technical matters and will take some time to resolve. We

[Mr. MacGregor]

have made it clear that eventually an order will come before both Houses and be subjected to full consideration. Ministers will be answerable to Parliament for the way in which they exercise and use that order-making power.

The amendment passed in the other place requires the trustees' agreement on the face of the Bill. That is quite unacceptable. It would give the trustees—a third party that is not answerable to either House—an effective veto over public spending and subordinate legislation, areas that are clear provinces of Parliament. If a future board of trustees withheld their agreement, however vexatiously, payments of money under the 1980 Act, scoring fully against public expenditure, would have to continue as now, regardless of the need for them. The trustees would be able to prevent the Government from bringing forward secondary legislation for consideration by both Houses.

That would mean that an outside body would have a veto over what comes before the House and the timings of payments of public expenditure. That is unacceptable, and that is why we have tabled the amendment.

Mr. Skinner: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have had many guillotine motions over the past 14 years, and it has always been the job of the Chair to draw to the attention of speakers the fact that it is a narrow motion, and that they should refer only to the reasons for the guillotine. My hon. Friends want to debate pensions —that is why we did not want the guillotine motion in the first place—but the Secretary of State is proving the very point that was made last night. He himself is using a guillotine motion to talk about the pension scheme. That is exactly what we were protesting about in the first place. I do not want to stop the right hon. Gentleman, but he is out of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Secretary of State was going rather wide of the motion, but I considered it in the interests of the debate that he be allowed to do so.

Mr. MacGregor: I am grateful to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I should have liked to discuss the issues without a guillotine; indeed, I should have been able to do so had we not encountered yesterday's problems, which I have already described in detail.

I hope that what I have said has given my hon. Friends the reassurance that I know they were seeking. We shall shortly be able to turn to the other main issue that is before us as a result of the Lords amendments. For all the reasons that I have given, I believe that the attack on our guillotine motion is spurious, and not prompted by a real rage. The Opposition knew exactly what they were up to: they were out to destroy any opportunity of completing the full discussion within the two days so generously allowed by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House. I commend the motion to the House.

4.20 pm

Mr. John Prescott (Kingston upon Hull, East): The Secretary of State has taken 35 minutes to introduce a guillotine motion. That is twice as long as any speech made during the debate in which the right hon. Gentleman has accused us of filibustering. I do not deny that what he has said is important; indeed, this is the first occasion on which such a statement about pensions has been made to the House. That, however, is what half our grievance is about. The Secretary of State appears to doubt that, but he knows that the amendments were tabled in the other place, not here. The pensions provisions were changed two or three times in Committee, quite apart from the substantial changes imposed in the House of Lords. Issues of real substance are involved here, rather than merely technical matters.

The case presented by the Secretary of State and the manner of its presentation remind me of the quotation that we heard yesterday from my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson)—Mrs. Thatcher's observation about the right hon. Gentleman. *[Interruption.]* The quotation reflects the view of the Secretary of State that was taken by the Prime Minister of the day.

In the section of her book entitled "Men in Lifeboats", Lady Thatcher wrote:

> "But I still wanted a new face at Education where John MacGregor's limitations as a public spokesman were costing us dear in an area of great importance."—*[Official Report,* 1 November 1993; Vol. 231, c. 46.]

I consider that a very apt comment on what the right hon. Gentleman has said today, especially what he has said about the important issue of pensions.

The Opposition have been accused of wasting time. I deny that, and I resented the charge when it was made by the Leader of the House. To be fair, he said that long debates took place on only two amendments; the Secretary of State has now changed that to two groups of amendments, comprising about 100. I believe that he was wrongly advised while I was shouting at him in the heat of the moment. Now we have witnessed the unusual procedure of a Secretary of State, rather than the Leader of the House, moving a guillotine motion—perhaps because, like us, the Leader of the House is not convinced by the Secretary of State's arguments.

Let me deal with the central charge, that we have been wasting time. Of course, that is in the nature of guillotine motions. I am not arguing against the guillotine; all Governments have used guillotine motions, and we all know the reasons why. I do not wish to enter into such an argument, or even to exchange facts and statistics about which party has introduced more guillotine motions. Such arguments often characterise debates of this kind, but I do not want to engage in one today; I want to refute the charge that the Opposition were wasting time, and to put the facts on the record.

It was said on television that we spent four hours on two amendments. It was suggested that they were technical amendments which did not deal with matters of substance. That is not so.

The Bill with which we dealt in Committee was a Bill of considerable proportions. It had 158 pages, 132 clauses and 11 schedules. That is large by any measure. During the debates in Committee it increased by 28 pages, eight clauses and two schedules. In the House of Lords major changes were made, increasing the Bill by 50 pages, 14 clauses and a further schedule. We have before us 470 amendments that came from the House of Lords, a greater proportion of which were Government amendments.

No one approached Opposition Members to discuss any type of guillotine discussion about timetables. The Bill has gone through the process in the House of Commons Committee, where there was agreement. There was not even one all-night sitting. There was an agreement with the Government about the process of debate. The Government

allowed us to choose the debate period of time and also the matters that we wished to debate and we worked on that through the normal channels and accepted that.

There has been much argument about how many hours of discussion took place in Committee and in the House —109 hours, 20 days, 35 sittings, although some sittings were not completed. The Minister of State will agree that we suspended some of the sittings because the amendments that the Government wished to make to their Bill were not ready. They asked that the House or the Committee finish early because they were discussing pensions with the unions and the trustee boards. I know that the Minister of State does not deny that, because one can read what happened from the record.

Whole schedules about pensions were taken out because discussions had to take place and we had to agree to suspend some of the sittings. Major amendments were made and we co-operated. Indeed, everyone knows that if one does not co-operate the Government immediately go for a guillotine. There is much evidence of that. We know now that, after a certain number of sittings, the Government automatically move to the guillotine. They never had to do that as a result of that delay.

We never had a guillotine then, or on the two days on Report, when we went through the whole Bill in two days with agreements about debate times, and no guillotine. There is no evidence, therefore, of our filibustering. One can consider the records and the comments that were made by Ministers at that time.

We had no desire to filibuster. There were many substantial issues in the Bill that we wanted to debate. We did not go through however many hours on sittings motions; we agreed quickly and got into the debate. There is no evidence that the members of the Committee wished to delay it. They wanted to debate the arguments substantially, for a good reason.

The only reason that we wanted to debate the Bill through was that pensions was a highly controversial issue and pensions are at the very end of the Bill. That is the problem with the timetable that now confronts us.

Mr. Stephen Milligan (Eastleigh) *rose*——

Mr. Prescott: I shall give way soon to the hon. Member, who has shown more than a passing interest in the pensions issue.

We wanted to allow sufficient time to discuss pensions. When we considered the motion before us for this sitting we assumed that the Government, in putting down the 10 o'clock motion, were prepared to go through the night and not cut off at 10 o'clock. Otherwise, why put it down? Therefore we could reasonably assume that it would go into the early hours of the morning. We can have debates among ourselves about how long, but it certainly suggested that the Government did not want to put it down by 10 o'clock.

We also thought that, if there were not an agreement and they went for a guillotine, we would be denied the opportunity—there are 28 debates—to get to the end of the Bill, which was where pensions were.

The Minister for Public Transport was good enough to send me a copy of the amendments and their order, and we did not protest. We took the debates as they were in subject form and said that, if they were making the case to the Table Office, we had no argument with it. When the 10 o'clock motion went down we assumed that we had some considerable time—20 hours if we wished—to go through the process. We could have sat through the night, although we did not much want to. We have gone through the period when we went through the night simply to make ourselves look good. I do not think that it is good for the House or the Members discussing legislation.

The argument was not that there should be only two days for discussion. It was not the Opposition who decided that the House should be prorogued on Friday—it was the Government. Never has there been such a long period as 14 days between prorogation and the Queen's Speech. There was ample time, if the Government wanted it because they had got into difficulties with their legislation, to go into next week. Why not? No argument has been made as to why we should not have another week.

We have just come back from 10 or 11 weeks when Parliament has been closed. Why did the Government not find time? We assumed that they wanted to go through the two days for the amendments to go to the Lords and then, by going to the Lords, they would allow us at least to go through the night and debate the issues. The argument is whether those amendments——

Mr. Milligan: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman. He is accurate about the Committee stage, where the discussion was fair and balanced. Does he agree, however, that, in the debate last night, the speech made by his hon. Friend the Member for Southampton, Itchen (Mr. Denham) was entirely devoted to events in my constituency, and to an issue that was not being debated? Does he not agree that that was a clear example of time wasting?

Mr. Prescott: The hon. Gentleman was not here during the debate, although I appreciate that we all have different reasons for not being in the Chamber. The Chair ruled that the speech by my hon. Friend the Member for Southampton, Itchen (Mr. Denham) was in order, so let there be no mistake about that. If it is in order, it is right and proper for any Opposition Member to raise anything to do with the Bill. My hon. Friend's speech was about the important maintenance work that takes place in the hon. Gentleman's constituency. There is nothing to prevent any hon. Member from mentioning any issue affected by the Bill.

Mr. Milligan *rose*——

Mr. Prescott: I shall not give way again. If the hon. Gentleman had been here for the debate he would have understood, but he was not. The hon. Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Milligan) did, however, make an important point at the beginning of his intervention, when he asked why we wasted time last night.

Let us look at the timetable. The Prime Minister's statement took an hour, which was very proper and we do not dispute that, although it took some of the time that we could have devoted to the Bill. Hon. Members have conceded that we managed to discuss not merely two amendments but two groups containing about 100 amendments—we could have voted on every one of them, had we wanted to filibuster or delay, because there was no guillotine: that would have taken weeks of parliamentary time. If we had wanted to filibuster, we could have done so from the beginning, but we chose not to.

The first debate yesterday concerned management buy-outs. One cannot possibly say that that was a simple, technical amendment—it was an important change in the

[Mr. Prescott]

Government's position. *[Interruption.]* If the Secretary of State listens, he will understand the matter a little better. Why was it important? Because the House of Lords had passed an amendment to say that British Rail should have the right to bid for a franchise. The Government dispute that, and they intended to take it out of the Bill. No doubt we shall come to the right to be able to bid for a franchise in the debate after the guillotine.

The amendment concerned the Government's alternatives, and the right of management to bid is involved. The Lords amendment imposed on the franchise director a new duty, under which he must give preference to management buy-outs. That is not technical: it is a substantial amendment, which was not tabled in Committee. It was a change introduced in another place and a matter for substantial debate.

The fact that we spent two hours discussing the amendment cannot be described as wasting time, because spokesmen from both sides of the House took exactly the same amount of time.

Mr. Matthew Banks: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Prescott: No. I wish to continue, as I am conscious of the time.

Mr. Banks: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Prescott: Let us see how clever the intervention is, then.

Mr. Banks: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for giving way. If Opposition Members were not wasting time last night and if those matters were so important, why did they not address their remarks more succinctly to the matter and to the amendments in hand?

Mr. Prescott: I shall come to that. I am trying to establish that we were discussing matters of substance. There may be some debate about how qualified hon. Members are to contribute to such debates, but I shall leave that subject aside. I am bound to say, however, that a matter of some substance was involved, which was relevant to a later amendment and to the Government's intention to take away what are known as the Peyton amendments, so we certainly were not wasting time.

The Minister of State, replying to the debate, said:

"I will seek to answer as concisely as I can some of the points that have been raised in this important debate. It has taken two hours, but it has covered very important issues, and they need to be addressed".—[*Official Report*, 1 November 1993; Vol. 231, c. 72.]

The Minister of State's assessment was fair and is not evidence that anyone was filibustering or taking time. If the Opposition are filibustering, the Government are the first to point it out. There can be no doubt about that. We do not doubt the integrity of the Minister of State when he made those remarks, so it is fair to say that we were not wasting time.

On the second group of amendments, the Opposition Front Bench did not speak during the third debate and did not seek to divide the House after the third or fourth debates, although those debates concerned issues of some substance. We did not do so, because we wanted to move on to the debate on Lords amendment No. 31, about the right to be able to bid, which we knew to be important. It was then after 9.30 pm—approaching 10 pm. I had already told the Minister of State that we would not press the matter to a Division. When the Minister was winding up the previous debate on the closure motion, I turned to the Whip and said that we would not be voting on it, so he should tell the Minister to shut up. The Whip sent the Minister a letter—I do not know whether it said "Shut up"——

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris) *indicated assent.*

Mr. Prescott: The Minister is readily agreeing that he shut up. The Opposition spokesman told the Minister to sit down because the Opposition were not going to press for a Division: they wanted to get on with the business. That is hardly an example of the Opposition wasting time—the Minister was speaking and wasting time, and the Opposition told him that he should sit down so that we could discuss the amendment.

I disagree with the comments by the Leader of the House on the subject. We are not trying to waste time. We were clearly trying to have a debate in proper order on the mistaken assumption that the debate was to continue after 10 pm—I agree that we made a mistake there. The Government did not try to have discussions about a timetable; they simply tabled the 10 o'clock motion. I assumed that we would have discussions through the usual channels about what time we might pull up stumps, but that did not happen.

Therefore, I believe that the Government's strategy was clearly to try to guillotine proceedings as quickly as possible, and to try to argue that the Opposition had wasted time. We had agreed that we could have taken weeks simply voting on the hundreds of amendments. It had dawned on the Opposition that, if we wanted to waste time, we could do that. We did not do so, because we wanted to proceed from debate to debate, and it can be shown that we have done that.

The time allowed for the debates—two parliamentary days—was not enough. I argued that there would be sufficient time for the debates if the prorogation of Parliament was delayed. The Government could have done that. I do not know whether the Secretary of State even argued for that—I suspect that he did not. Perhaps he will tell us whether he said that he thought that the House should discuss those important matters and should have more than two days in which to do so.

He must have assumed that there would not be sufficient time to debate the issues properly before 10 pm—otherwise, the Government would not have tabled the 10 o'clock motion. The Government tabled that motion because they believed that the two days that they were offering were probably insufficient, so they wanted to introduce a timetable.

Mr. David Nicholson: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Prescott: No.

We must assume that the Government wanted to guillotine debate. They wanted to avoid debate on essential matters. The guillotine has many disadvantages, but one advantage of yesterday's guillotine was that the Secretary of State gave us his view on the pension funds—a matter for debate on which discussion has already started.

Some guillotine motions include a timetable listing clauses and amendments so that it is possible to debate various subjects. The Secretary of State has said that he thinks pensions are important—we all agree on that—so I find it astonishing that he did not allocate a specific time to discuss that subject. The subject of pensions forms the 24th debate—according to the Minister's timetable, there are still 20 debates to be held in the House before that one. Therefore, it will be impossible to reach that debate unless we rush through the previous ones.

If the Minister thought that pensions and Lords amendments relating to pensions were important, why did he not table a timetable motion with specific cut-off times? That is quite normal. The fact that he did not do so is another sign of the fact that he had no intention of allowing a proper and honest debate on pensions, whatever he might say. It was entirely in the Government's hands to do so. It was not a matter for discussion with us. The Secretary of State could have advised the Leader of the House what should be done. Therefore, I assume that the Secretary of State advised the Leader of the House to do otherwise.

Why do the Government want to rush the debate and avoid discussion? They want to avoid debate on the most controversial subjects, where Government actions have provoked contention. It was interesting to hear the Secretary of State talk about the two important issues we should debate, which is obviously a reflection of how important he believes those matters are. The Minister of State has spelt out many more important subjects in the document which has been given to us.

Of the "crucial" debates, one was the right to be able to bid for franchises and the other involved pensions. What about TUPE—the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981—involving employees' rights? Is that not important? Were we not told in Committee that we would not have to rely on existing employment legislation because the Minister of State thought it important to write the protections into new legislation? The Minister of State thought that that was important, but he changed his mind—in fact, the Government had to change their mind when the Bill reached the House of Lords. The Government have now introduced provisions that will make it much worse for British Rail employees.

The Secretary of State did not think that that subject was important enough for a debate. I shall come to that in a second or two. Therefore, we think that those issues are important. The right to bid is important, but I will not take up any time on that matter, because it is almost the first debate to which we shall come after the guillotine. I am more concerned about whether a debate on subsequent amendments can be guaranteed.

On clause 82, which deals with TUPE, the Minister made it clear that the transfer schemes made as a result of the Government's privatisation proposals will be subject to the provisions of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981, thereby extending the application of TUPE to transfers other than purely commercial undertakings. That meant that the Government intended to write into the Bill that all employees of British Rail would be guaranteed that right. But what happened was that they then went to the House of Lords and made it absolutely clear that they intend to rely simply on the Act itself. That was a change of mind.

It is right for us to have a proper debate about that matter, but the guillotine will not allow it. Those employees in the railway industry, who already face uncertainty as a result of the massive reorganisation that has gone on in the railways, and the wholesale reorganisation that will come out of the Government's privatisation schemes, now face the possibility of reorganisations once they are put into a private company.

The idea behind TUPE was to guarantee the right of workers—a right that came from Europe and had to be written into our legislation and enforced by the courts on the Government, who rushed the measure through on Third Reading in another place. That said that, if a person transfers from one employer to another, that person's rights transfer with them. We thought that that was right and proper, and we were assured by the Minister that that was the case.

Not to put that into the Bill, which is what the amendments seek to do, will mean that a British Rail employee could go to a private company, when the normal law might apply. That will mean that workers may have to go through a process of adjustment and change of rights under the present British Rail organisation. They can lose their employment rights, be made redundant and lose all the protections that are guaranteed. There is nothing to prevent them. Such workers are not transferring; they are only being reorganised at present under the same employer, British Rail.

When all that reorganisation has been completed, it is passed over to private companies. No doubt the private companies have made that a condition, saying that they do not want to pay for the conditions that are given to railway workers; that they do not want full-time workers; they want part-time workers. They might say that they do not want to be responsible for the employees' redundancy and employment rights. That is why there should be a debate. Yet the guillotine is designed to prevent that kind of debate. That is what makes us angry.

The guillotine is designed to prevent Parliament from debating a matter which we were assured in the House of Commons was one thing, but which was changed in the House of Lords. We are now prevented from having a debate on that. That is a matter of some substance. It affects every one of our constituencies. It is not a technical matter: it is a matter of considerable importance to hundreds of thousands of employees in those circumstances. The Government are relying on the guillotine to do their dirty work for them.

On pensions, the Secretary of State has constantly said, as he does in his document, that he will always guarantee that employees will be no worse off as a result of whatever pension changes the Government undertake. We are talking about a pension fund with assets of £8 billion. That is of some relevance to the coal industry and the post office, which together have about £20 billion of assets in their pension funds. All are candidates for the process of privatisation. They will not generate income for the Treasury. In the main, revenue will come from pinching the assets from the pension funds.

The Secretary of State has been good enough to point out that he believes that everything will be all right. I say that he is intending on a design to take the assets of the funds out of the pension fund. As that is my charge against the Government, let me make clear a number of things.

The unfunded pension schemes that used to apply to British Rail before 1979-80 were schemes where the Government simply paid the pensions and received the contributions. There was no fund. The Government then

[Mr. Prescott]

—I believe that it was 1975, and it was confirmed in 1979 legislation—put that on to a proper footing. Indeed, the present Chancellor was Under-Secretary of State for Transport at that time and I was the Shadow Minister, so I well remember the changes that were taking place. The Chancellor then said that he intended to make the pension fund self-funding, so that the Government would be free from it and there would be no claim on the Government's resources.

The Government's one obligation was to consider what their capital obligations were to the fund and assess them on a yearly basis. That amount was considered to be about £70 million per year. That money was the Government's obligation to pay to the pensioners. There is no doubt about whose money it was. It belonged to the pensioners. Those are the kind of moneys the Secretary of State is talking about when he talks about IOUs, but I will come to that.

There is no doubt that the Government had an obligation to pay that yearly amount. On that point alone, as the Secretary of State well knows, the Government intended originally to wipe out that amount. They said that they wanted to cancel that amount. There was a wholesale protest from the pensioners and the trustees, and eventually in Committee the Government agreed that the money would continue to be paid. On that matter alone, the Government offered the House of Lords an IOU. The Government said that they would not make the yearly payment. They said that they would give an IOU, which could not be cashed, was non-marketable and would not be in gilts.

It fills me with great joy to believe that I could receive an IOU from the Government. I do not know what it would be worth today, but it is suggested that it could be cashed only in the year 2000. It could not be used to buy any assets. It could not be invested to make money. It is simply an agreement by the Government not to pay now, which presumably was helped by the generosity of the pensioners, who do not agree with it, to help deal with the public sector borrowing requirement that the Treasury wants to reduce. The £80 million that belongs to the pensioners in the first place is to be put on to an IOU. That is what is happening, and the Treasury saves £80 million each year. That £80 million belongs to the pensioners and its repayment is to be delayed until some time in the future.

I was thinking only the other day, when we talk about compensation for nationalised industries or private industries that are renationalised, what an interesting formula that is for compensation. If we were using the same formula for compensation for capital, Conservative Members would be screaming that it was robbery. The fact that the Government can do that for the pensioners and get away with it without any word of disagreement from Conservative Members is quite deplorable.

Mr. Milligan: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the trustees of the scheme agreed to the principle of going ahead in that fashion? What they are concerned about is the way that the measures are implemented, the rate of interest that is paid, the maturity, but they have accepted the principle that the hon. Gentleman is saying is such a fraud.

Mr. Prescott: I will come to that point. It is a good point and I am glad that the hon. Gentleman has given me a chance to come to it. As he knows, the trustees were concerned that they would not have any control over those matters. The House of Lords was concerned about the solvency matter, to which the Secretary of State referred. That was the argument of Lord Peyton. It was said that the Government would give a promise. The other place did not feel that that was enough—an interesting point—and did not like the idea of an IOU. That came from a Conservative ex-Secretary of State for Transport.

The Government, in the debate in June or July, said that they would talk to the trustees about that matter and come to some agreement. They did. There was an agreement between the Government, the board and the trustees. It was entitled:

"Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Transport, the British Rail Pension Trustee Company and the British Railways Board",

and it spelled out some of the issues to which the Secretary of State has referred. But the issue was whether, in the making of orders relating to any changes affecting the fund, there would be an agreement with the trustees, or simply consultation. First, it was said that it was not possible to write that into the Bill. They came up with a formula, which was rushed through because the debate was to be the next day.

The chairman of the trustees fund, Mr. Derek Fowler, was sent for, along with James Jerome. They concocted the memorandum of understanding. It deals with the point made by the hon. Member for Eastleigh by saying:

"the Government remains committed to support payments to certain BR pension funds. The timing of such payments will be agreed with the Trustees and will take account of the absolute guarantee now being provided."

They went to the House of Lords saying, "Pensions in our time," but like the other document, "Peace in our time," it was not worth the paper it was written on. The first thing that the lawyers of the trustees fund said was that it did not mean anything because it does not refer to anything in the Bill. Therefore, it is just a statement. It does not mean anything.

The chairman of the trustees made it clear that he thought that he had been kidded by the Government, by which he means the people who signed the document, acting on behalf of the Government: the Minister for Public Transport—the fact that the Secretary of State did not sign suggests that the matter was a difficult one; he always keeps out of trouble, this guy. Derek Fowler, chairman of the British Rail pension fund and James Jerome, the British Rail board member responsible for finance signed, but they felt that they had been duped. They were told that the word "agreed" would be used, but when the Government came forward with their amended version, it contained the word "consultation".

All hon. Members know that there is a heck of a difference between having to have an "agreement" about what is done with £80 million and "consultation". One does not need to be a lawyer to know the difference between those two words. Hon. Members can well understand then why the chairman of the British Rail pension fund, having agreed this without the agreement of the other 11 trustees, was disowned by them. He had thought that the word "agreed" gave him a kind of veto. If the Government's position is that the use of the word "agreed" creates problems, did they not know that when they wrote the document, or did the Government put it in knowing that people could be bought off, that they would

not be able to do anything about it, that perhaps they would not check, and they might even believe the Government? Well, they did. What fools.

The document is not worth the paper that it is written on. The Government do not offer agreement, they offer consultation. I have some time and respect for the Minister for Public Transport, who deals with many difficult issues, but I am bound to ask: does no one resign any more?

What is the Secretary of State's responsibility? If the document does not mean what it is said to mean, if the words do not mean anything and were simply used to buy votes in the other place by suggesting that there was agreement, that sounds like a Government who cannot be trusted—a Government with whom one cannot afford to have an agreement. They sign documents to convince the other place that everything is all right and then they have the audacity to come back here and tell us that everything is all right with the pension fund. Did the Secretary of State not read the document? Did he agree it or will he now blame the Minister for Public Transport? Will the Secretary of State say whether he read and agreed the document?

Mr. MacGregor: I have already made my position absolutely clear. We shall reach agreement with the trustees. We have made it clear that if there are differences and we cannot reach agreement, those points will come to the House and it will be for the House to decide because we are talking about public expenditure. An outside body cannot have a veto over decisions on public expenditure which are for the House. We are having good discussions with the trustees. We will do everything that we can and we believe that we shall be able to reach agreement, but we cannot pre-empt the right of the House to decide on public expenditure matters or the right of the Government to bring proposals before the House.

Mr. Prescott: Did the Secretary of State read the document?

Mr. MacGregor: Yes.

Mr. Prescott: So the Secretary of State signed a document saying that there would be agreement with the trustees. The chairman of the trustees, who did not have time to consult his board, signed the document telling his trustees, "I had to do it last night, but don't worry—the Government can't do anything unless they agree it with us." The other place was informed of that acceptance but the Government had no intention of using the word "agreed", for the reasons that have been given. That is misleading, to say the least. I do not know what parliamentary language could be used to describe such actions, but they are not honourable ones.

Hon. Members need not open their mouths to show shock and disbelief. If the Secretary of State is telling me that he does not understand the words and their meaning, he should not be in the job. I believe that he did understand the meaning of the words and he dealt with the matter in that way so as to kid the other place that the Government had an agreement with the trustees, despite the fact that only the chairman of the trustees had been involved. The chairman was then left to hang and dry and neither has had the decency to resign over the matter.

Mr. MacGregor: I have made the position clear throughout. It is outrageous for the hon. Gentleman still to be going around the country saying that the Government intend to take pension fund money from the pensioners, which is what he has been saying time and again. That is not the case and it is time that the hon. Gentleman stopped saying it.

Mr. Prescott: The House will recognise that the Secretary of State knows that he is in difficulty and wants to move the debate on. This is a matter of importance to a man of great integrity who put his name to a document because he believed the Government. I have a copy of a letter dated 26 October, which I understand was sent to the Secretary of State, saying:

> "What I had not foreseen when I signed the memorandum was the Secretary of State would be given powers to virtually take over the fund if the solvency guarantee was to be invoked. In my letter dated 15 October I expressed my concern about the implications for future real pension increases of your proposals to cease making cash payments in respect of the Government's statutory obligations in the 1980 Act. I restated that concern at the meeting with Mr. Roger Freeman."

The letter continues.

That man, a public servant, was misled by the Secretary of State and the Minister of State. That is a serious matter. It seems that we are not to have a proper response from the Secretary of State or the Minister of State. At least the Secretary of State has now admitted that he did read it, so he cannot put the matter entirely on the Minister of State's shoulders. We will leave the people to judge for themselves, having heard the debate or read it in *Hansard*, what they think of the Secretary of State's competence, and to remind themselves what the Prime Minister of the time thought of the Secretary of State.

I come now to another issue which exercises the mind of the Secretary of State. He now apparently disputes my accusation that the Government intend to obtain access to the pension fund and to use its assets. First, I make it clear that the £80 million will not go to the pensioners at the moment and that the Secretary of State is retaining rights over that. Therefore, we can reasonably agree that the Government have taken £80 million on an IOU which, on the word of the Secretary of State, is to be repaid in the year 2000. The word of the Secretary of State did not last three months in the other place, so I do not attach much importance to it. The Secretary of State will have to admit that that £80 million is now being kept by the Treasury to help with the public sector borrowing requirement.

It is concern for the public sector borrowing requirement that has largely motivated the privatisation of British Rail. Not much income will be generated from the sale. The Secretary of State has already admitted that the taxpayer will have to pay twice as much—£2 billion—to run it. The Department of Transport has been making an assessment. The Secretary of State has already admitted that it will cost more, so the taxpayer and the fare passenger will pay more for fewer services. The argument has been well made. The Treasury's concern is how it can get at the pension fund assets.

Having established the facts about the £80 million, I now put a matter of record to the Department of Transport.

It will be recalled that the National Bus Company, with assets of about £190 million, was sold for £45 million. The Public Accounts Committee was astounded at such a sale, although I am bound to say that it is quite usual for the Department of Transport. Because it got some money, it thought that it was making money. The Public Accounts Committee investigated. When asked what price had been obtained for the National Bus Company, the Department of

[Mr. Prescott]

Transport said £200 million, £150 million of which came from the busmen's pension fund, which was broken up in the same way as is now being suggested, and the money went to the Treasury. Does the Secretary of State deny that? Apparently not, even if he knows about it. However, that is true and he can check for himself.

I have now established that pinching from a pension fund is not new. The Government have already done it with National Bus and they are starting to do it with British Rail. Now it is a matter of judgment whether one can believe the Secretary of State when he says that the Government do not intend to do that. We already know that the trustees could protect pensioners if the trustee's agreement was required, but the Secretary of State is offering only consultation.

The Government can restructure the fund. The rights and powers that Mr. Fowler talks about relate to the fund being made insolvent. The Secretary of State is already beginning to take money out of it with his 60 per cent. and 40 per cent. formula on surpluses. Fewer resources will be in it—yet, for technical reasons that I shall not go into here, the demands of the 1975 pensioners are growing. This is a fund that has no extra income going into it because it is a closed fund, so in reality it is likely to move towards insolvency.

Let me tell the Secretary of State what will happen then. He might not be here—he probably will not—but the good old Treasury civil servants will always be here whatever Government are in power, and they will restructure the fund. It is agreed that the surpluses and the distribution of assets in that closed fund will be about £2 billion. The Government will then say to the pensioners, "Look, why don't we go back to the old times? Why don't we agree to pay you your pensions and we will take the assets for now? We will pay you over a period, and we will take your £2 billion to help us with the public sector debt." That is not unique for the Treasury. It is possible, and the changes in the rules which are contained in the amendments which we are not allowed to debate will allow that to happen. That is why we make the charge against the Secretary of State.

The guillotine is not about time, but about the essential issues that were still to come. I understand now—I am sure that the House will understand also—why the subject of pensions was to be left until the end of the debate. The guillotine has enabled us to discuss pensions. If the debate had continued, we would have raised those points when the subject was to be discussed. However, the guillotine has allowed us to do that now.

The Secretary of State made no mention of disagreements over memoranda of understanding. He has tried to cover his tracks. Therefore our charge is that the guillotine is not about wasting time during debates on technical issues. The issues affect a quarter of a million pensioners and railway workers. The guillotine is about the money that is in the fund that the Government have no right to claim, and which they are to attempt to claim on what I notice is the second anniversary of the Maxwell swindle of pension funds.

The issue is one of the Government breaking their word. It is an issue of deliberate deceit. The guillotine is designed to prevent debate, and cover up the actions of a dishonest Government. They are a Government of incompetence, a Government of duplicity and a Government of disrepute. Above all, they are a Government who are attempting to rob railway employees and railway pensioners of their rights and pensions—and they are attempting to do that with a guillotine which damages the process of democracy itself.

5.1 pm

Mr. Stephen Milligan (Eastleigh): The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) began by attacking the Secretary of State for speaking for 35 minutes. The hon. Gentleman spoke for exactly 40 minutes, and took fewer interventions than my right hon. Friend. That suggests that the hon. Gentleman is less than aware of his own verbosity.

The hon. Gentleman was accurate when he said that there was agreement between both sides on Committee. There was a fair debate, with no attempts to filibuster, and the issues were discussed fairly. However, yesterday afternoon something went badly wrong, and there was an outbreak of verbal diarrhoea among Opposition Members. [HON. MEMBERS: "You were not here."] I was not here for a good reason. *[Laughter.]* Hon. Members have not heard the reason. I wished to wait for the debate on the main amendment, and I did not want to waste time as Opposition Members did.

There are two possible explanations for the outbreak of verbal diarrhoea.

Ms Glenda Jackson: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Milligan: I will not give way at the moment.

There are two possible explanations. The first is that the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East has been unable to spend a great deal of time on railway matters. He was unable to attend the majority of Committee sittings, and we know that he has an eye on the deputy leadership of the Labour party and may be moving to another job. The hon. Gentleman obviously hoped that some of his colleagues who assiduously attended the Committee would help him by making lengthy speeches. That would obviate the need for him to go through a complicated set of amendments. What possibly happened—as happened with the assassins of Thomas à Becket—was that the followers followed the master's instructions rather too assiduously. That is perhaps an uncharitable explanation.

Mr. Wilson: I am sure that the pensioners of Eastleigh will note that, following the analytical account of their prospects made by my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott), all that their Member of Parliament could do was engage in a juvenile assault on my hon. Friend.

The hon. Gentleman's analysis concerns the only debate at which he was present, which was the first debate yesterday. Will he tell the House whether he specifically disagrees with the Minister who wound up the debate? The Minister said that it had been a full and important debate, and that many points had been raised by the speakers, who spoke alternatively from both sides of the Chamber? Is the hon. Gentleman dissenting from the Minister of State's view of the debate? Will the hon. Gentleman perhaps turn his attention to the issue of pensions, and in particular the letter from the chairman of the British Rail pension fund?

Mr. Milligan: My hon. Friend the Minister is polite, and he was certainly right to say that the debate had been

full. I might have chosen a slightly different adjective. My hon. Friend was also right in saying that the debate was important, because it drew the real objectives of the Labour party to the attention of the House. The intention was not to have full debate on pensions—an important issue, I entirely agree—but to force the Government to a guillotine. The objective of the Labour party was to embarrass the Government, rather than to have a proper debate. That is the second possible explanation for the verbal diarrhoea from Labour Members.

I wish to cite in evidence an interesting speech made by the hon. Member for Southampton, Itchen (Mr. Denham). I know the hon. Gentleman well, because he is my pair. He is assiduous in the House, and he speaks on a wide range of subjects including housing, overseas aid and the railways. The hon. Gentleman always makes relevant points, is an extremely competent hon. Member and does not waste the time of the House.

The hon. Gentleman spoke last night—unfortunately, I was not here—and he has gracefully apologised for not giving me warning that he intended to devote the whole of his speech to events in my constituency. Those events related to the future of British Rail Maintenance Limited, which is very important. The hon. Gentleman and I have discussed the subject with my hon. Friend the Minister, who has made a series of helpful suggestions of which, unfortunately, the hon. Gentleman did not seem to be aware.

The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East said that the speech had been entirely in order. I do not know whether he was here last night, but it is clear in *Hansard* that, on two occasions during the speech by the hon. Member for Itchen, Mr. Morris interrupted to point out that the speech was out of order. The speech was clearly not relevant to the debate.

It is perfectly clear that Opposition Members tried last night to force the Government to impose a guillotine. That is what happened. It is important that the Bill is passed, and I will be supporting the Government tonight.

One of the unfortunate aspects of the discussions is that we have not had the proper time to debate two crucial issues. The first of those is the right that is now being given to British Rail's bid for franchises, which I welcome. I want the process to move forward gradually, and I want the private sector to compete on a level playing field with the public sector. That is called market testing in other areas of Government. BR should have the right to bid, provided that the bid is not unfair vis-a-vis those management buy-outs that have extremely optimistic prospects. I welcome the revised guidelines to the franchising director that will make it clear that a private operation will not be able to take over a franchise unless it provides a better service than the existing BR service.

Mr. David Nicholson: I wish to make a point that I did not make because the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) refused to give way to me. The hon. Gentleman made it clear that he was prepared to go through the night on the matters, and he also made it clear that the important debate on British Rail bids—my hon. Friend is addressing the subject now—probably would be reached at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. There are hon. Members who want to listen carefully to what my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State may have to say—and also question him—on that delicate matter. Is it sensible for hon. Members to do that at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning?

Mr. Milligan: My hon. Friend makes an intelligent point, and it is unfortunate that there will not be a proper debate as a result of the antics of the Opposition yesterday.

The new guidelines to the franchising director make it clear that private operators must provide better services than the existing BR service if they get a franchise. If BR retains a franchise, I hope that it will do so for a significant period. It is not specified in the Bill what that period might be, but I hope that it would be about six or seven years. That would give BR a real chance to make the service work, and would provide genuine competition between the public and private sectors with the simple aim giving the best possible service to the passenger.

I welcome the fact that the Liberal Democratic party has made an important contribution to the debate. The hon. Member for Devon, North (Mr. Harvey) appears surprised; perhaps he did not read his party's manifesto at the general election, which clearly favoured privatisation and the franchising process. On 2 March, the hon. Gentleman made a most interesting speech to the Committee, during which he explained that his party would not support the Bill for one reason. The reason was that BR would not be allowed to bid for franchises. The hon. Gentleman made it clear to the Committee that if the Government were to have a change of heart to allow BR to bid for franchises on fair terms, the Government could count on his party to support them in the Lobby.

Mr. Nick Harvey (North Devon): The hon. Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Milligan) said a moment or two ago that he was keen to see market testing of the services. The difference between what the Government's proposals and market testing is that there will be no competition on a level playing field of the sort that I said on 2 March that I wanted. If that were to happen, my party still would be perfectly willing to support the measure. British Rail is being allowed to bid, but in every imaginable circumstance the bid is to be disregarded. That is not a market test; nor is it competition on a level playing field. It is a complete and utter fix.

Some Conservative Members have been sabre-rattling over the past few weeks, trying to convince their constituents that they are rebels. It is a poor do if those hon. Members can be convinced as easily as that. If the Government give us competition on a level playing field, they will get support from the Liberal Democratic party. However, what stands before us as a Government amendment does nothing of the kind.

Mr. Milligan: That comes as no great surprise to us, because the Liberal party twists and turns on every issue. The hon. Gentleman says that BR will not be able to compete on a level playing field. If he believes in privatisation and franchising—perhaps he no longer does—he must accept that it is extremely important to give management buy-outs, which are a difficult and fragile operation, a genuine chance to succeed. To force the same BR managers to make a choice between bidding as a management buy-out and bidding as BR will not work. So the compromise that the Government have come up with is a good one.

The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East talked at some length about pensions. That is a critical issue for

[Mr. Milligan]

my constituency, where there are 2,000 railway pensioners, and for the hundreds of thousands of railway pensioners across the country. I agree with the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East that pensions are one of the most important issues in the Bill.

I must say in all honesty that the Government's original proposals were not satisfactory. The Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen were justified in criticising those proposals. They would have left pensioners in a worse position than before. The railways pension fund has been extremely well run. It has yielded real increases in pensions. People who have given a lifetime's service to the railways are entitled to a decent pension. There is no reason why privatisation should in any way materially affect them unfavourably.

Ministers rapidly recognised that the original proposals were not satisfactory. It was regrettable that it took so long to reach a proper agreement. However, the memorandum of understanding signed at the end of July was, indeed, such an agreement. It provided guaranteed indexation and it provided that pensioners could continue to share in the surplus. Most important, it gave the fund a Government guarantee against insolvency. Those three measures taken together put the pensioners in a better position than they are in now.

It would be graceful of Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen to recognise the achievement by my right hon. and hon. Friends and by the railway trustees. I pay tribute to the way in which the trustees stuck at their task through a long and difficult negotiation and relentlessly pursued the interests of the people whom them represent.

One important issue is outstanding, but it should not obscure the overall settlement. The issue is payment under the Transport Act 1980 to people who served before 1975—not only those who retired in 1975. It was agreed between the trustees and the Government that, in return for the solvency guarantee, those payments, which currently run at about £50 million a year would be rescheduled to take account of when the liabilities came due. The matters that have not been agreed include the maturity, the valuation of that capitalised gilt-edged stock and the rate of interest. Those are vital matters, on which pensioners must be given answers if they are to be reassured.

Mr. John Heppell: Does the hon. Gentleman agree that the trustees have agreed to deferment of payment only on the basis that no scheme would be introduced without the agreement of the trustees? Does he agree that the position changed when the Government sought to change the memorandum of understanding? Originally it required the agreement of the trustees; the Government sought to make it only consultation of the trustees.

Mr. Milligan: The hon. Gentleman is right to draw attention to that point. There is a legitimate and genuine issue here. Parliament has to be sovereign on matters of public spending. No outside body can have a veto over parliamentary decisions. Although it is most unlikely that the trustees would behave irresponsibly, they might renege on the agreement and demand both the solvency guarantee and continuation of the present payments. The interests of Parliament and of the taxpayer—who is not often represented by Opposition Members—have to be considered.

I have talked to the chairman of the trustees. Although he shares the view of the hon. Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell), he does not share the view of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East that he was duped. He believes that the Government have behaved honourably.

Mr. Prescott: He says it in the letter.

Mr. Milligan: He does not say that he was duped. He says that the trustees need guarantees.

There is a genuine legal problem. We cannot give an outside body a veto over decisions about public spending. However, I ask my right hon. and hon. Friends on the Front Bench to give some additional guarantees to ensure that the matter is settled to the satisfaction of the pensioners, the trustees and all involved.

First, can the negotiations on the matter resume as soon as possible? Secondly, can the negotiations resume on the basis that the new arrangements for the present net value are the same as the old arrangements? Although the payments may be rescheduled, there should be no effective monetary loss at today's value. Thirdly, if, by any chance, agreement is not reached, will the Minister come to the House, explain why and set out the views of the trustees before any further legislation to implement the agreement is brought before the House? If the Minister does all three of those things, it will be possible for him to satisfy the interests of the pensioners.

Mr. Stevenson: Can the hon. Gentleman help me, please? I am listening to the debate carefully, as I did throughout last night, which is more than he did. Is the hon. Gentleman calling on his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to conduct the negotiations on the basis of the memorandum, which referred to "agreement", or on the basis of consultation of the trustees? I am sure that he would agree that consultation and agreement are entirely different. The word "consultation" is contained in the amendments before the House.

Mr. Milligan: I am asking my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to seek to achieve agreement. I accept my right hon. Friend's argument that it is not possible to write into primary legislation an argument which gives an outside body a veto over parliamentary sovereignty. That would be wrong. However, it is vital to seek the agreement of the trustees. If that cannot be achieved, the Minister should come to the House and explain why. The House will judge whether it is a proper explanation. If it is not, it will not pass the necessary secondary legislation. That is a reasonable way to proceed.

Ms Glenda Jackson: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Milligan: I will not give way. I have given way many times. Everyone is complaining that more time is needed to discuss other issues. I support the motion. I support the Bill. I believe that if privatisation proceeds gradually, is tested at each stage and is undertaken on the basis of improving freight and passenger services rather than on the basis of dogma, it will be greatly in the interests of the country. I will support the Government tonight.

5.17 pm

Dr. John Marek (Wrexham): The hon. Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Milligan) never ceases to amaze me. The hon. Gentleman could have asked for guarantees from the Minister when I first tabled an amendment on pensions in Committee. With the Conservative majority of one, something might have been done about the problem. Did the hon. Gentleman say anything? Not a bit of it. He slavishly followed exactly what the Minister said, with the result that the opportunity for changing the pensions legislation was lost. So it is a bit rich for the hon. Gentleman to come along here now and say, "I want some guarantees, Minister; please will you help me?"

The hon. Member for Eastleigh made one of the longest speeches that has been made in the past two days, apart from the Front-Bench speeches, which were worth every minute. We learned a lot from them and I would not have missed either of them. The hon. Member for Eastleigh made one of the longest speeches of yesterday or today, yet he complains that Opposition Members filibustered. He showed himself up. He was not here yesterday except during the first part of the debate.

The only helpful comment that the Minister made about British Rail Maintenance Ltd. was in essence to say that there would be redundancies. *[Interruption.]* The hon. Gentleman need not shake his head. He can read *Hansard*.

Mr. Milligan: I think that my speech was about 17 minutes on the clock and half of that was interventions. I read carefully the words of my hon. Friend the Minister about BRML in *Hansard*. It is a matter of great importance to my constituents. There is a threat of redundancies because the modernisation of trains means that they need less maintenance. About half the jobs are under threat. That is why, when we had a meeting last week, my hon. Friend the Minister made the helpful suggestion of creating the Eastleigh liaison group. He has promised to attend every meeting to find other ways of retaining the jobs by bringing extra work to Eastleigh. I greatly welcomed that suggestion.

Dr. Marek: If the hon. Gentleman had been here during the debate yesterday, he would know that the Minister said precisely the same thing as he has just said. There was a debate on the special function of Eastleigh. It maintains carriages which are run on the third rail. But the hon. Gentleman was not here for that debate. He should read *Hansard*. The Minister did not give much hope. I suspect that BRML will be in great difficulties as a result of the Bill when it reaches the statute book. The hon. Member for Eastleigh has the chance to make amends to his constituents by voting against the Bill or voting against the guillotine motion. Whether he will take that chance is another matter.

The Bill has been largely rewritten. There are pages and pages, looking through the Lords amendments as any hon. Member knows, and the Government have sought to argue that most of the changes are technical and do not need a lot of debate and that there are only two issues that require debate—the question of pensions and whether British Rail could have the right to bid. Since the hon. Member for Eastleigh is in favour of BR having the right to bid, are there any of my hon. Friends who were in Committee who heard that from the hon. Gentleman at the time? Another amendment in my name was defeated by one vote. If the hon. Gentleman had faced up to that issue a little earlier, we might have had a different result.

I do not accept that, because the pages and pages of new amendments and proposed legislation are technical, we should not have time to discuss them. We had only a weekend to consider them. I took the precaution of asking the Vote Office to post them to me and I received them on Friday. I did not receive the Government amendments to the Lords amendments until later.

It is not my job to accept the Minister's word that 50 pages are technical and we therefore should have gone home to bed at 10 o'clock yesterday and should go home at 11.30 tonight. I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott): there is no reason to sit all night tonight, but last night we should have sat all night and done our duty to the country, the travelling public and the railway employees and considered all the technical amendments and changes that have been suggested by the Lords. Not a bit of it. We cannot do it.

The debate yesterday was not filibustered in any way. People made normal speeches. If the time is totted up, the chances are that it was the Minister who spoke more than anybody else, by a substantial margin. I do not say that to embarrass the Minister. It is right that the public and hon. Members deserve an explanation of all the amendments. On the fourth set of amendments, which would have been passed on the nod, the Minister said that they were important. I agree that they were important amendments —not necessarily so important to deserve half an hour or an hour's debate, but certainly deserving of four or five minutes of ministerial explanation followed by a chance for any other hon. Member to ask questions. Unfortunately, nothing like that will be possible tonight, as we are having a setpiece debate.

I shall not speak for long because I know that many hon. Members wish to speak, but we will not do the duty, as is normal, of examining the Bill line by line. The Bill will go through the House without that being possible. Yet the Government need not have got themselves into such a position. They could have allowed a third or a fourth day, and if they had allowed us to debate overnight, I doubt whether a third day would have been needed.

Contrary to my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell), I did not count 128 amendments that had been discussed, but 99, which, out of 470, is more than 20 per cent., so I do not understand why the Secretary of State for Transport said that we would be here until Christmas if we were to discuss all the amendments. I admit that that is a somewhat selective statistic, but it is not as selective as that chosen by the Leader of the House yesterday.

It is a great pity that the media seemed to swallow that statistic hook, line and sinker without being present and checking the facts so that they could give the public an independent and objective view. However, 99 amendments from 470 are about to be disposed of, and would have been disposed of on the nod if the Minister had not said that the fourth group was important and that it was necessary to spend three or four minutes explaining them. At that rate, if we had carried on yesterday, we would have been finished by now.

I utterly reject the view of the Leader of the House and the Secretary of State, who has not said much in Committee, on Report, or during Lords amendments—I am not denigrating him for that, but it is shown by the

[Dr. Marek]

record—that we have been filibustering. We have not. We have been trying to get into shape a stupid Bill, which most of the country does not want and which now cannot be put into reasonable shape or made operable. Nevertheless, we have tried.

Clearly, there are two important issues that we must discuss. The first is the right of British Rail to be able to bid for franchises. When a proposal is sent back from the House of Lords—the revising Chamber—because it wants the House to think again, there is no reason for the Government to say, as they did earlier, that we have discussed that matter ad nauseam, and therefore do not need to do so again. There have been new developments and we owe it to the country, if the revising Chamber asks us to think again, at least to discuss it again and see whether to change our minds.

Secondly, the issue of pensions has developed a great deal and we should be able to talk about such important matters that may vitally affect the pensions and livelihoods of British Rail employees in the present climate, as outlined by my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East. I agree with the Secretary of State that, to the extent that public money is involved, the Government should be accountable and should have a final say in what happens to that money, but most of the money in the pension fund is not the Government's—at the moment, none of it belongs to the Government.

My fundamental argument is that the money in that pension fund is for the benefit of pensioners and should never, ever come under the control of the Government. It is a great pity that, as a result of the guillotine, we will not be able to develop those arguments any further.

I consider it an outrage that the Government allowed this second-rate, botched-up Bill to be introduced, will allow it to be passed—unless Conservative Members come to their senses—and have succeeded in forcing through a guillotine to stop discussion on vital matters.

5.28 pm

Mr. John Biffen (Shropshire, North): One of the charming characteristics of guillotine debates is that they transform themselves so that they are rarely about guillotines, but rather an opportunity to discuss the Bill about to be guillotined, as so eloquently shown by the hon. Member for Wrexham (Dr. Marek) and my hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Milligan).

I shall reflect on the thoroughly unsatisfactory situation in which the House now finds itself. Once one discards the pyrotechnics and rhetoric that customarily grace such occasions and are cheerfully exchanged from one side of the Chamber to the other, the truth is that no House of Commons having even a modest regard for the self-respect of legislators would be presenting them with such an extensive and conscientious Bill to be dispatched in two days. For it to be against the expected prorroguing of Parliament makes the imperative even more incredible.

I was not in the least surprised that my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House announced the guillotine. Had I been sat on the Conservative side, I would have shouted whatever improving and encouraging remarks, if I felt them necessary in these dark days, and if I been on the Opposition Benches, I would have shouted with all the contrived venom that was manageable.

The truth is that we are here because, as a House of Commons, we are allowing the Executive, whether it be Conservative or Labour, to determine the passage of business by such means. That is not what the House is for. Originally, a guillotine was a very unusual development, so the cry of constitutional outrage had just a touch of truth about it. One had to be at least a mild thespian to give the impression that one was deeply concerned. Now, a guillotine is an integral part of the passage of a Bill. Nobody supposes for one moment that it could be otherwise, and I do not.

However, with the present arrangements and with the control so heavily weighted in the hands of the Executive, we find ourselves in a different position. The guillotine is perfectly understandable, but nonetheless is set out in terms that I do not believe to be helpful to the House, not least because the House will be debating a number of matters, whether the franchises or the pensions, in which the disputes do not run along the fault line of party politics. All the more reason for the Executive to get the matter dispatched as soon as possible.

We do not have to endure such a procedure as part of the humiliation of the Back Benches. A report of the Procedure Committee sets out the virtues of automatic timetabling for a whole range of legislation. It still awaits the determination and judgment of the House. The House sleeps in the prospect of that. It passes measures undebated and practically unnoted and, to some extent, is gradually being forgotten. That is how the House reacts to its circumstances, and as long as it is complacent and compliant, it will be neglected.

5.31 pm

Mr. John Heppell (Nottingham, East): I start by declaring an interest. My hon. Friend the Member for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape) said that he was the only Member who hoped to live long enough to draw a British Rail pension. I hope that he does not know something about my health that I do not know, but I also hope to draw a BR pension. I hope that it will still be there after the Government have finished their machinations.

One of the surprising results of serving on the Standing Committee was the affection that I began to feel for the Minister for Public Transport. Some feel that he behaved badly in Committee, but I thought that he performed marvellously, given that the Bill was so ridiculous. At times he made it seem almost believable, and that earned him the affectionate title of "Roger the Dodger" as he moved his way through the pitfalls that the Government had set into the Bill.

A more fitting nickname for the Minister, and for the Secretary of State, would be "The Exterminator". I say that not because they have managed to do their best to get rid of the railways as we know them now and to cut away the constitutional right of Members of Parliament to debate the issues, but because, during the passage of the Bill, I have seen more ratting than a local government employee working in pest control. The Government have ratted on almost everyone—British Rail employees, the passengers, the passenger transport executives and the pensioners. If the latest information is true, they have ratted on the trustees of the pension fund as well.

I had meant to speak on a number of issues but, in showing why the guillotine is wrong, I feel it important to speak on pensions in particular. My hon. Friend the

Member for Wrexham (Dr. Marek) was wrong. We dealt not with 99 amendments last night but with 127, although we did not get to the vote on the last 28. I am realistic. I recognise that, with 470 different amendments, after 730 in Committee and 250 on Report, there was not a cat's chance in hell that we would get through the business in two days. I knew, and I think that most hon. Members knew, that we would have a guillotine at some stage. But I did not expect the guillotine to come at 10 o'clock.

What would have been wrong with the Government allowing us to go on until 12, 1 or 2 o'clock? Why was it that, when hon. Members were present in the Chamber wishing to debate issues—employment rights, British Rail's right to bid, and pensions—we were not allowed even those few hours? The Government took the decision to curtail the debate, using the reason that hon. Members were filibustering, before the reality of 128 different amendments being dealt with was known to the Leader of the House.

My main concern about pensions is the Government's contribution to the scheme. I had my first assurance on that from the Government in July 1992, when they said that they would take measures to safeguard my pension. That did not happen. On 20 January, they changed the wording and said that they would ensure that the terms of my pension were no less favourable. They then came up with two options, effectively a Hobson's choice. Neither of them made my pension terms more favourable, as I have said before.

The Government then went to the chairman of the trustees and persuaded him to sign a memorandum of understanding that guaranteed the solvency of the pension fund while in return the Government were allowed to borrow some money in the short term. I would not have agreed to that, but I can understand the pressures that the trustees were under. They were given a Hobson's choice because, if they refused that option, they might get nothing from the Government and the funds would be taken under Government control. Therefore, after the chairman, the other trustees signed the memorandum of understanding.

The Government have since ratted on that memorandum. Originally, they said that the timetable for paying the money back would be through an agreement with the trustees; now they are saying that they will work it out themselves. The arrangement that the Government want is to borrow the money but repay it when the pension fund needs it. I wish that I could tell my bank manager that I would like to borrow £5,000 and pay it back when I thought that the bank needed it. I know what my bank manager would say to that. I know what I would say to the Government as a member of the British Rail pension scheme: it is not on.

Dr. Liam Fox (Woodspring): Surely what matters, what is important, is what happens to the pensions. The Secretary of State spoke about guaranteed payments, inflation-proofing and a share in the surplus. Is the hon. Gentleman suggesting that the Secretary of State was misleading the House?

Mr. Heppell: The hon. Gentleman will know that it would be unparliamentary of me to suggest such a thing. I will let the facts speak for themselves.

On 22 April the Minister made a statement—*[Interruption.]* I hope that the Secretary of State will listen. He might then understand what is happening with the pension fund; when he made his statement, he clearly did not. Let me go back even further. In 1980, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then Under-Secretary of State for Transport, decided that he wanted to rid himself of the railway pension fund. At that time, it was a non-funded fund and the Government had complete responsibility for it. The then Minister decided that the Government would wash their hands of their commitment.

It was not what the trustees or pensioners wanted but what the Government wanted. He said, "Okay, we owe you a lot of money, so we'll give you these payments, but it's a once-and-for-all settlement. There will be no negotiating afterwards. If the fund goes bust, your pension has had it. We've washed our hands of the issue."

What good is the word of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Treasury is now trying to claw the funds back? The Government now say that they will no longer pay those funds, but will keep them separately and look after them. When the trustees ask when they will get them back, the Government say that they cannot give a date. When the trustees ask how much they will get back, the Government say that they cannot give an amount. When the trustees ask when they will get it, the Government say, "You'll get it when you need it." When the trustees ask whether they can decide when they need it, the Government say, "Oh no, the Government will decide when you need it."

It is a deceitful mechanism to try to ensure that the Government transfer the money from the pension fund to the Treasury, just as they would have done with the options which they originally gave the pensioners last July. The Government have always had their eyes on the pension fund, and they are determined to do that.

Another reason why the guillotine motion should not go through is because of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981, the employment rights enjoyed by people in this country. Article 8 of the directive on acquired rights says that, on transferring from one undertaking to another, people's employment contracts—length of service, pay and conditions—go with them. The Government have never liked legislation that protects ordinary workers but, because it was a European directive, the article had to be made law and that was done by TUPE.

TUPE effectively rewrote those articles and said that, in future, when people changed from one undertaking to another their employment rights went with them. In Committee, the Minister made it clear that he had included a special provision that TUPE would apply in all cases. That satisfied Opposition Members, and the debate about employment rights disappeared at a stroke. We said, "Fair enough, if TUPE is to apply, we have no worries whatever." It is annoying to find that, now that the Bill has been through the Lords, the Minister's undertaking has been taken out.

The Government have gone further and introduced a new clause trying to evade TUPE. They have invented a mechanism to try to avoid a law of their own making. What message does that send out to, as my hon. Friend the Member for Wrexham would say, their "cronies in the City" and those who have their eyes on our pension funds? What message does it send out about respect for the law when the Government are trying to devise mechanisms to get round their laws?

The Government are saying that, before people transfer to a different undertaking, their pay can be reduced, their

[Mr. Heppell]

hours can be increased and their employment rights can be changed. It is clearly a mechanism to evade the law and the Government should be ashamed of themselves not only for doing that but for offering compensation to employees. They are paying out compensation from taxpayers' money to make it easier for private companies to employ people on starvation wages and for unworkable hours.

The Government resisted one Lords amendment to stop a 72-hour limit being placed on railwaymen's hours of work. Legislation exists to limit the number of hours worked by people who drive on the roads and of airline pilots, so why do we not have legislation to limit the hours worked on the railways? I shall not feel safe to know that an employee of one of those new companies can drive for more than 72 hours a week. How can he be expected to be alert under those conditions?

For all those reasons, the guillotine motion is wrong, and I hope that the hon. Members will vote against it.

5.46 pm

Mr. Tim Rathbone (Lewes): I shall not detain the House for long, because we wish to move from this debate to discuss the fundamental Bill and the Lords amendments as quickly as possible.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State brought up the subject of pensions, and it has been well developed on both sides of the House. I was entirely reassured by statements by my right hon. Friends in the Chamber and in written form in recent months. To the best of my knowledge, all the pensioners who have been in touch with me on that matter—there have been quite a number—have also been reassured.

However, some people outside the House are not yet reassured—not through any fault of the Government, but because the matter has been stirred up so despicably by Opposition Members, whether they are pensioners of British Rail or are doing it just for political reasons. That has caused sufficient worry that reassurance is still necessary. I hope that my right hon. Friends will reassure the House that they will do everything in their power to provide that reassurance to people outside the House who are genuinely worried about their future pensions.

I thoroughly endorse the points made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Shropshire, North (Mr. Biffen). We could organise our business better so that we can at least spend some time on everything, even if we are not satisfied with the amount of time that we spend on some things. I hope that the Government and the Whip will take that message back to the Leader of the House, so that we can consider as soon as possible the Select Committee on Procedure report, the age of which I cannot remember.

I expressed my discontent with the sudden arrival of the guillotine motion yesterday evening and had an opportunity to discuss it with my right hon. and hon. Friends and other luminaries of the party organisation in the House after the statement had been made. I was not entirely convinced by the rationale, but now I am completely convinced, because I fear that Ministers have been bested by the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) who made it absolutely clear that, as a destructive Opposition, he intended to make the Government go right to the line, which would mean risking the loss of the Bill.

Mr. Snape: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Rathbone: I shall do so in the hope that the hon. Gentleman is brief, which is what I intend to be.

Mr. Snape: Before the hon. Gentleman goes down that road, he should remember that, although my hon. Friend the Member for Bolsover spoke today, he did not speak in yesterday's debate.

Mr. Rathbone: I shall not contradict the hon. Member for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape), because I know that he intends to pursue his own way towards his pension to the bitter end. I wish him well in that endeavour, and I hope that the Secretary of State's remarks have reassured him.

The intention of the hon. Member for Bolsover to go right to the line shows the divergence of opinion in the Opposition parties. There was a difference between the statements made from the Opposition Front Bench about good intentions and statements by other Opposition Members. Therefore, the Government were, sadly, right to introduce a sudden guillotine. If we have to vote upon it, I hope that we shall do so swiftly, so that we can deal with the amendments as quickly as possible.

5.50 pm

Mr. Nick Harvey (North Devon): The Secretary of State has told us, as did the Prime Minister earlier today and the Leader of the House last night, that 185 hours or more have already been given to the Bill. We have heard about new clauses, and about 2,000 amendments have been tabled. One is entitled to ask at the end of all that why there are still more than 400 amendments. Those are not wrecking amendments tabled by Back Benchers or by the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner), who seems now to be regarded by some Conservative Members as the official Opposition: they are Government amendments.

I have here the Bill that went to the Lords and the document containing the amendments that came back, and one is twice as thick as the other. We are virtually being asked to consider a new Bill. What sort of Government are they who, two days before the end of the Session, are still presenting to the House such a mammoth amount of material for consideration?

It is right that, in the earlier part of yesterday's debate, progress was somewhat slow, but that was the first opportunity for some months that the House has had to debate the Bill. We were guided by Mr. Deputy Speaker to the effect that, as the clauses being amended were general, it was in order to have a general debate. As a result, the debate on the first group of amendments was of the nature of a fourth Reading.

It is completely untrue for Ministers to say that we have considered only two groups of amendments. We were on the fifth group yesterday and had reached the stage at which no hon. Member was attempting to speak. To all intents and purposes, we had disposed of 99 amendments, and were therefore some 20 per cent. of the way through consideration of this mammoth document. When stumps were drawn at 10 o'clock last night, we were within seconds of starting the debate on the all-important amendment about British Rail's right to bid.

All sorts of assertions have been made by Conservative Members about the tactics of the Labour Opposition. I am not conversant with what those tactics might have been, but at 10 o'clock we were about to begin that debate, and

I had every indication that we would vote on the matter at 11.30 pm. It is untrue to say that unsatisfactory progress was being made.

Three important debates were scheduled for yesterday. The first was on management buy-outs and the second was on assets, and we were about to debate BR's right to bid. That would have left three more significant groups of amendments to deal with today, on discount fares, employment rights and pensions. I can vouch for the fact that the official Opposition were encouraging me to do everything possible to reach a point at which enough time would be left for an adequate debate on pensions. Any suggestion of an attempt to delay matters is not borne out by the facts.

Just as we were about to start the debate on what the Government say is the all-important topic, it was decided that three hours of Parliament's time should be allotted to discussing the guillotine motion. If we had gone on for less than three hours last night, we would have made more progress that we are making now.

The reason for that state of affairs is that the Government's handling of the legislation has been shambolic. Those who served on the Standing Committee will know that, time after time, the Government were only a day ahead of the Committee in tabling amendments. They were tabled at the last possible moment, and all too often they were starred. The Government were reprimanded by the Chairman of the Committee for their discourtesy to him and to the members of the Committee.

On one memorable occasion the Minister of State, in his normal steady manner, presented amendments on which the ink was hardly dry. By the time that the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) had made a good breakfast of them, the Minister had to admit that they were technically incompetent and would be withdrawn and replaced.

That is the story of the Government's handling of the Bill, time and again. A minute or two before the guillotine announcement last night, the Minister of State declined the offer by his hon. Friend the Minister for Transport in London to move it formally. The Minister insisted that he needed to speak to the amendment at hand because it replaced another Government amendment which, he admitted, had been incompetent. Too much of the Government's material on the Bill has been incompetent.

Yesterday, we had the spectre of primary legislation being made deliberately vague so that the courts could later clear it up. There is considerable Government precedent for that. The poll tax cost this country about £14 billion, and two or three years later the Government had to put the entire subject of local government finance to the test again with more legislation. The same happened over criminal justice.

If the Government did not railroad legislation through so arrogantly, they would not have to return to put right their own mistakes. It is little wonder that we already hear rumours that, even at this late stage, the Government realise that the Bill is technically incompetent and that another Bill may have to be introduced in the next Session to clear up loose ends.

The Government seem to be applying the principle of market testing to their legislation. They introduce legislation, see how it works, and a couple of years later return with more. The hon. Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Milligan) spoke about market testing, but this is not market testing. In its current form, the Bill allows BR to bid, but in every imaginable circumstance the bid will be disregarded.

The Government do not give the franchising director one shot at this: they give him four. On the first shot, he has to skew the bidding to featherbed a management buy-out; on the second, he has to skew it to featherbed the efforts of a new entrant to the sector; and on the third, he has to do it in the name of competition. If, after all that, he has not managed to disregard a BR bid, he is required to prevent anyone from being over-dominant in the market.

When we start from a market in which one supplier has 100 per cent., one can scarcely in any circumstance not meet the Monopolies and Mergers Commission's definition of a monopoly. That covers every conceivable bid. It is the "I don't like your face, so you can't bid" rule.

Hon. Members who during the summer and the autumn have attempted to flex their muscles by telling the Government that they will hang out for BR bidding, have secured nothing. The concessions that I wrung out of Ministers in Committee and on Report were——

Dr. Liam Fox: Name them.

Mr. Nick Harvey: I shall name them directly. One was that BR would be able to submit not only historic costs but a business plan at which the franchising director would be obliged to look and also to examine the bottom line figure and the projected balance of the plan. That would have meant that, in every circumstance, a private bidder or a management buy-out bid would have had to beat that figure. It is not even achieving that. British Rail's figure could be disregarded, at least in the plan that I characterised as a ghost Bill, although the Government never recognised the term.

At least, under that scheme, the passenger could be guaranteed that the bidder would have to do better than British Rail and the taxpayer could be guaranteed a better price. The Bill is much worse. It is not competition or market testing; it is market rigging. It is not about trying to secure the best possible deal for the passenger; it is about Conservative party philosophy. It is because the Government want to put the industry into the private sector.

The hon. Member for Eastleigh said that, if the Liberal Democrats were in favour of privatisation, we would be in favour of the measure. We are not in favour of privatisation, but we are in favour of the best possible service for the passengers. There is no philosophical problem with the private sector competing. In Sweden, when the national carrier was exposed to competition from the private sector, it improved productivity, reliability and everything else. That option was available to the Government, and we said earlier that, had they taken that path, they could have looked forward to some support.

The Bill is nothing of the kind; it is not market testing. It is small wonder that recently the author of a book was able to say after the Conservative party conference that Thatcherism was alive and well. She need do no more than look at the Bill to be totally convinced that Thatcherism is indeed alive and well.

6.1 pm

Mr. Matthew Banks (Southport): I am most grateful to you for allowing me to catch your eye, Madam Deputy Speaker. I hope that, when right hon. and hon. Members

[Mr. Matthew Banks]

have the opportunity of reading the *Official Report* tomorrow, at least on this occasion they will see that I was in the Chamber.

I listened with great interest to my right hon. Friend the Member for Shropshire, North (Mr. Biffen). As all hon. Members are aware, my right hon. Friend is a wise counsellor. I agree with my right hon. Friend and my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) about the importance of bringing forward the Jopling proposals as quickly as possible. I hope that my right hon. and hon. Friends on the Front Bench will take note of what my elders have said.

I took the advice of my right hon. Friend the Member for Shropshire, North in 1989. I knew that his counsel was wise then. I followed it, and that is why the hon. Member for Southport sits on this side of the House. However, I hope that my right hon. Friend will not mind me pointing out that not all that long ago he was Leader of the House, and the Executive were still fairly powerful then.

It is important that we look carefully at how we timetable our debates. I listened to the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner), who yet again is not in the Chamber. He spent most of our debate yesterday outside the Chamber.

Mr. Snape: So did you.

Mr. Banks: I hear what the hon. Member for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape) says, but the hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that, apart from a very short time when I took refreshment, I was here in the Chamber. That is why I can recognise and record which Opposition Members were present for that debate; I shall come back to that in a moment.

I should mention the hon. Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell) just before he leaves the Chamber. He said that he thought fairly early on that the Government had decided to introduce a guillotine. If the hon. Gentleman will forgive me, I beg to differ. After I had spent most of the debate in the Chamber and listened carefully to hon. Members on all sides of the House, it was clear to me that it was very late in the day that right hon. Friend decided to table a guillotine motion.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the amendments under discussion yesterday afternoon were widely drawn indeed. As you know, Madam Deputy Speaker, no hon. or right hon. Member really fell foul of your ruling. In spite of those amendments being widely drawn, there was no doubt that the speeches of Opposition Members were rarely succinct and not always relevant to the amendments under discussion.

Had Opposition Members been a little more concerned about making a team effort and acting like a proper official Opposition—they were shown up by the hon. Members for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer) and for Bolsover, who were here earlier for only a few minutes—and had made a better stab at things, it would have been possible for us to get on and talk about the particularly important amendments on pensions and the so-called Peyton amendment. I hope we will be able to get on with those debates at the conclusion of this guillotine debate.

I did not have to be convinced by the words of the hon. Member for Bolsover, because it soon became apparent precisely what the official Opposition were doing. I thought that they were shooting themselves in the foot at 10 o'clock, when my hon. Friend the Leader of the House moved the guillotine motion and a number of Opposition Members made various points. None of those hon. Members is in the Chamber now; nor were they here throughout the debate. I look around the Chamber to see if they are here now.

Mr. John McAllion (Dundee, East): I am here.

Mr. Banks: The hon. Member for Swansea, East (Mr. Anderson), the right hon. Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris) and the hon. Members for Bolsover and for Bradford, South, to name but four, all stood up after 10 o'clock with what my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State described as synthetic anger. That describes the whole charade fairly well.

Of course, it is not just the official Opposition who wasted time yesterday, knowing full well that we had a relatively limited amount of time to debate these important amendments. I see that the hon. Member for Argyll and Bute (Mrs. Michie) has just arrived. I do not think that she was here yesterday.

Mrs. Ray Michie (Argyll and Bute): I was.

Mr. Banks: I know the hon. Lady is in the *Official Report* as having voted, but having sat through most of the debates, she was not here regularly. Only the hon. Member for North Devon (Mr. Harvey) was here throughout most of the debates yesterday afternoon and evening. Yet the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire (Mr. Kirkwood) and the hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. Carlile) came to the House at 10 o'clock to stand up with what my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State described as their own synthetic nonsense. They did not even enter the Chamber throughout the afternoon, so far as I am aware, to take part in the debate.

My hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) was very kind to say that he saw the way the debate was flowing, and that the hon. Member for Bolsover had convinced him of the filibuster that was taking place. Some Conservative Members are slightly less charitable than my right hon. Friend. We were very much aware of what was happening by about 7 or 8 o'clock in the evening. Opposition Members really have to decide.

I see that the hon. Members for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) and for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) are not here. Perhaps, as my hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh mentioned earlier, they are hatching a plot to depose the leader of the Labour party. One really has to set an example.

I am not about to criticise Opposition Members for filibustering and talking on matters other than the guillotine if I do not follow an appropriate course myself. My hon. Friend for Shropshire, North made that point. He has briefly left the Chamber, but he was right to come to the House and make it clear that it is about time that the Jopling proposals saw the light of day. Many Opposition Members, including the only member of the Labour Front Bench who is present, have been in the House longer than me and know how debates proceed. They should have been able to make a far better fist of tackling my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and my hon. Friend the Minister for Public Transport than they did.

6.10 pm

Mr. Hugh Bayley (York): I would like the House to stop playing I spy and to debate the guillotine motion. The right hon. Member for Shropshire, North (Mr. Biffen) was right when he said that in introducing the motion at such an early stage, the Government showed contempt for the House. They brought 470 Lords amendments before the House and we dealt with 100 last night. Still the Government want to stifle debate.

For more than a year, the Government have been desperately trying to make their case for rail privatisation, but they have lost the argument. The Secretary of State is left like the emperor with no clothes and he shuts down debate to hide his nakedness. That is what happened today. We oppose that, believing that the 470 amendments that have come from another place should be properly debated. The Government's straitjacket on debate will prevent the House from considering many important Lords amendments that it has a right to discuss.

I will put a number of points to Ministers now, because the House will not otherwise have a proper opportunity to debate them. The question of the national railway museum and the national heritage is one that affects my constituency. In another place, Lord Caithness, Minister for Aviation and Shipping, said that the Minister for Public Transport would write to the museum and

"do all that we can to make provision which is as favourable as possible to the museum".—[*Official Report, House of Lords,* 19 July 1993; Vol. 548, c. 563.]

That related to the museum's right to claim redundant documents and artifacts. The Minister wrote to the museum in July, stating:

"Noble Lords also stressed the importance of retaining the broad rights of first claim which the museum presently enjoys. I am happy to accept these proposals, and to introduce provisions in the Bill which will give a right of claim to artifacts in both the public and private sectors."

We argued long and hard about that in Committee and in July, at the last moment, the Minister gave an undertaking to introduce amendments to permit the museum to remain the national centre of rail heritage in this country. Did he do as he promised and make sure that appropriate amendments were tabled in another place before it finished its consideration of the Bill? No, he did not. He made a promise, but he failed to make good that promise. Why?

What measures does the Minister propose to ensure that the national railway museum continues in the future, as in the past, to have a right of first claim on redundant railway equipment and records, at no cost? No material cost will be imposed on either a public or private sector rail operator, because the equipment in question will be redundant. Why did the Minister fail to honour his promise, and what will he do to put that right?

I seek an assurance that investment levels will not decline. In British Rail's 1992-93 annual report——

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order. The hon. Gentleman's remarks seem to be wide of the debate. Some latitude has been allowed by the Chair, but I am not sure that the hon. Gentleman's comments relate to the guillotine motion or to the amendments to which it refers.

Mr. Bayley: If the House had been given time properly to consider all the amendments, it would have had an opportunity to debate future investment levels. There will be no such debate, so I want the Minister to say how investment levels for rolling stock, signalling, track and infrastructure will be maintained at historic levels. If that is not done, there will be huge redundancies in the rail manufacturing industry. The arguments were explored on previous occasions, but I want that answer from the Minister.

As to the amendments on clause 105, the Bill makes provision for the Government to write off British Rail's historic debt, which the annual report puts at almost £2 billion. If that sum is to be written off, it will have to be written off by taxpayers to make privatisation more financially attractive to private sector operators. Why should taxpayers in my constituency foot the bill for privatisation? Why should retired railway men and women on low pensions who pay income tax also have to meet a £2 billion cost after spending their lives building up a rail system that is now to fall into the hands of private operators?

6.16 pm

Ms Glenda Jackson (Hampstead and Highgate): In common with my hon. Friends, I was exceedingly surprised when the guillotine motion was imposed on almost 500 amendments from another place. As other right hon. and hon. Members pointed out, we have been denied the opportunity to debate what is virtually a new, alternative Bill.

Conservative Members, including the Minister for Public Transport, were highly critical of the Opposition for wanting to debate what were described as purely technical amendments. The possibility that many of my constituents, particularly those who are disabled, may never again be able to use a train because stations on the north London line are unmanned and will remain unmanned is by no means a technicality. Many women are afraid to travel after dark because it is frightening to find oneself on an otherwise deserted station with no one to give assistance in either earshot or eyesight.

My constituents want to use the railways and to see the British Rail network expand. That was their understanding and mine of this whole farrago of a Bill. However, debate on extremely important issues is being curtailed because, according to the Minister, the amendments are purely a technicality.

The hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone), who I regret is not in his place, repeated an allegation that was made by Conservative members of the Committee—that the concern expressed by British Rail pensioners at what they viewed as threats to their pension fund by the Government and the Bill was motivated by the Opposition. I would like to be able to tell the hon. Member for Lewes that those of my constituents who are BR pensioners take that presumption of lack of character on their part very hard. I am pleased to note that the hon. Member for Lewes has now returned to his place.

My constituents who are members of the BR pension fund have dedicated their lives to the railways, are extremely hard-working and are immensely responsible and sensible people. Their concern about the attack on their pension funds stems not from what the Opposition have said, but from what the Government have done and are continuing to do. That is one reason why I am so concerned about the guillotine motion that is being imposed upon us today.

[Ms Glenda Jackson]

The Secretary of State said that pensions had been fully debated. He neglected to point out that changes in the pension arrangements certainly have not been debated in this place. Confirmation that he is attempting to make changes without any debate comes from the chairman of the BR pension board. On 20 July, the memorandum of understanding mentioned earlier in the debate was agreed between the Department of Transport, the trustees and the British Railways Board. It was supposedly binding on all parties. In a letter dated 26 October, Derek Fowler—the chairman of the BR trustees—wrote to the Minister saying:

"I certainly did not envisage the cash payments would cease indefinitely when I signed the Memorandum."

In fewer than three months, the agreement that the signatories to it thought was binding on all parties was in the process of being changed by the Government.

A particular issue of concern to the trustees is that in the initial wording of the memorandum agreement was reached that changes to the method of payments under the 1980 Act would be made only with the agreement of the trustees. The memorandum stated:

"The Government's obligations will be reflected as an asset of the Pension Fund and will be taken into account in determining any surplus available for pensioners. We intend to agree the details of such an arrangement with the Trustees, and we will lay before Parliament, in due course, Orders which will give effect to such agreement."

Now, the Government are changing the wording of the memorandum to replace "agreement" with "consultation", which will allow them to override the wishes of the fund's trustees.

As Derek Fowler said in a further letter to the Secretary of State dated 6 October:

"It is proposed to change the wording of the Memorandum of Understanding to provide that payments under the 1980 Act may be changed after consultation with the Trustees and not, as previously provided, by agreement with the Trustees. Such fundamental change is unacceptable to the Trustees."

The Government are attempting to railroad the changes through the House without proper debate. British Rail pensioners are effectively being penalised for the success of their own pension fund. Is not it deeply ironic that the Government should be doing so at the same time as they are attempting to entice people away from dependence on state pensions? They are using the pension surplus to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement, effectively forcing pensioners to pay for the Government's mistakes and broken pledges.

The Government have proven themselves to be completely untrustworthy on the pensions issue, as was proved by the correspondence from Derek Fowler. What other guarantees given during the course of the Bill and in today's debate can be believed by the pensioners? The lack of guarantees and the lack of time being provided by the Government to debate almost 500 Lords amendments makes me understand why so many BR pensioners now say that the initials "BR", as they relate to the pension fund, no longer stand for "British Rail", but for "bank raid".

6.23 pm

Mr. Brian Wilson (Cunninghame, North): It is a shame that we have had a three-hour debate on a guillotine motion when instead we could have continued with our consideration of the substantive issues in the Bill. The move certainly does not appear to have done the Government a great deal of good. Last night they gained themselves the opprobrium of cutting short the debate. Today, they have provided a platform from which to say a great deal about the pensions issue. In addition, they have moved the debate on the right to bid from late last night to a relatively prominent time today. That does not strike me as a tactical masterstroke.

It is important to set the record straight on some of the factual reasons why the guillotine motion is a disreputable exercise. First, it is essential that the House understands that no approach was made to the Opposition to arrange a timetable for our proceedings on Lords amendments, despite the fact that a timetable had been agreed and observed throughout the Committee and Report stages. It is clear that, if the Government had wanted a timetable, they would have asked for one. It is equally clear that they knew last Friday that they would do exactly what they did last night and when they would do it.

Secondly, the statements made last night by the Leader of the House were inaccurate, as has been shown today. He made those statements in the Chamber and also in notices given to the press—for example, he said that only two amendments had been dealt with in five hours. That was fallacious nonsense. I think that the right hon. Gentleman was deeply uncomfortable with the task allotted to him last night, so it is significant that he has distanced himself from today's proceedings.

Thirdly, the debates last night were legitimate and were recognised as such by the Minister of State. It is interesting to note that, in addition to nine ministerial speeches, there were three extensive speeches from Tory Back Benchers —as was perfectly legitimate—and nine interventions from other Conservative Members. The idea that there was an Opposition monopoly on speeches is simple fabrication.

Fourthly, if the debate had proceeded last night, we would have reached the amendment on the right to bid not in the middle of the night, as some Conservative Members have suggested, but at 10 pm. There was absolutely no need to curtail our proceedings at 10pm. The Government did that for their own reasons—their desire to limit debate in and scrutiny by this House. They did so in the full knowledge that the more scrutiny there is by this House and by the wider audience outside, the more their proposals are discredited.

Another point worth putting on the record is that the fact that the Government now have such a tight timetable for getting the Bill passed is entirely their own responsibility. The fact that they are counting the hours before Parliament is prorogued is entirely their responsibility. They have only themselves to blame for the way in which they have handled the Bill from start to finish—introducing amendments at every stage and virtually rewriting the Bill, culminating in 470 amendments being made in the other place.

It has been a farcical procedure, as it had to be because the Bill is inherently so deeply flawed. One consolation for the Opposition is the knowledge that, no matter how often the Government rewrite it, how extensively they change it or how they try to patch it up in response to objections, it will still be deeply flawed when it is enacted and the chickens will then come home to roost. There will be big political trouble for them, not for us.

As has been said by several of my hon. Friends, it was farcical to say last night and today that the proceedings must be rushed through and that we can speak for only an hour or two on pensions and an hour or two on the right to

bid, with great swathes of amendments not even being considered—yet on Thursday the Government are sending us away for another fortnight's recess. They do not want Members of Parliament in the House. Indeed, it has now become the general rule that they want the House to sit for as little time as possible, because when it is sitting the political focus is on this place and that it is not in the Government's interests.

For all those reasons, what we witnessed last night and today is a charade. There was no need to curtail the debate at 10 pm last night. We knew that at some stage the Government would rescue their Bill. We knew their timetable and we knew that they were expecting more trouble in the other place. I am sure that the Minister of State listened to the "Today" programme this morning, when Lord Peyton had certain things to say about the amendments. I was delighted to hear that he was less easily impressed by bogus compromises than were the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) and one or two others who paraded their consciences during the summer, but who now apparently feel able to give the Secretary of State everything that he wants. So we hope that the principles and concerns of those in the other place will be more consistent than those of hon. Members. It would be wrong to comment on what will happen in the other place, but as it voted for the amendments in the first place it is not certain that it will be bought off as easily as some hon. Members.

The issues have been well covered by my hon. Friends. We shall debate some of them, but as I shall not speak much later I should like to express my deep distaste for the performance of Ministers in the debate on pensions. I still have not decided whether the Government first thought, "We are going to get our hands on pension fund surpluses, so we have to privatise the railways," or whether rail privatisation came first and, as a byproduct of that, they realised the phenomenal implications for the Treasury.

Mr. MacGregor *indicated dissent.*

Mr. Wilson: The Secretary of State feigns disgust. Will he have the decency to inform the House of the potential implications for the public sector borrowing requirement of the action that the Government are taking on the railway pension fund? We shall then see whether the sums involved and the political implications are consistent with this shrug of the shoulders and his comment that it is ridiculous to say that those implications entered the Government's mind.

If the Government had introduced the Bill without assessing the political implications of what it would allow them to get away with, from their point of view it would have almost been a dereliction of duty. If those implications did not occur to the Secretary of State—given Baroness Thatcher's comments about him, that is conceivable—we can bet our bottom dollar that they occurred to the Treasury.

My comments on pensions are a lot less important than those of the chairman of the British Rail Pension Trustee Company. The Minister for Public Transport is pointing at the clock: he does not want to be guillotined when he speaks later. Before the summer recess, that chairman had been prepared to take the word of Ministers that everything was going to be all right. As my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) said, in his superb analysis of the matter, the chairman did not manage to persuade other trustees to take the word of Ministers. However, this man, who was taken in by the Government, wrote to the Secretary of State on 26 October 1993, saying:

> "I very much regret the need to have written to you three times in less than three weeks on fundamental differences of view between the Government and the BR Trustees. . .The steady erosion of what I thought had been agreed seems to justify the sceptical approach taken by many of my colleagues and others to that Memorandum."

What an indictment of Ministers, of the Government and of their integrity.

We shall continue the fight on behalf of pensioners. We shall alert them and ensure that the future not only of the railway pension fund but of every pension fund in the country which is at risk from the Bill will be as major a political issue as rail privatisation. If Ministers are unable to rebut those words of the chairman, they should not be sitting on the Front Bench.

6.33 pm

The Minister for Public Transport (Mr. Roger Freeman): The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) has many endearing qualities, but careful attention to the clock to allow sufficient time to respond to a debate is not one of them.

Before I deal with the extremely important issue of pensions, may I say to the hon. Member for Hugh Bayley —[*Laughter.*] I meant the hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley). [*Laughter.*] As I wanted to make a serious point, I shall come back to it.

Let me deal with the issue of pensioners. I am grateful to my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone), who put his finger on the point. This issue has been stirred up deliberately by the Labour party to create quite unnecessary fear, and the Liberal Democrats are not absolved of that charge.

My hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Milligan) was absolutely right and I pay tribute to his constructive contributions. I ask Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen whether they challenge what my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport said on four issues.

First, there is no dispute that pensioners will have their own independent pension fund—their own assets, with trustees responsible for managing the fund. There has never been a suggestion that the Government would take those assets and it is disgraceful of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) to go round talking about those assets being pinched and in the same breath asserting that the Government are as guilty as Mr. Maxwell. That is a calumny, and it causes unnecessary fear in the minds of pensioners.

Secondly, I ask the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East, is there any question about the solvency guarantee provided by the Government and the index-linking of railwaymen's pensions for inflation? Of course there is no doubt.

Mr. Prescott: Of course there is.

Mr. Freeman: Of course there is no doubt about that, because it is on the face of the Bill. The hon. Gentleman knows that.

That represents a major change since 1980. When my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then a Transport Minister, promised continuing payments during proceedings on the Transport

[Mr. Freeman]

Act 1980, he did not do so in the context of a Government guarantee on railwaymen's pensions. The scene has changed completely—at the request of trustees.

Thirdly, there is no doubt that railwaymen will have a 40 per cent. share in any surplus created by the good management of the pension fund. That 40 per cent. is the same percentage as pensioners have enjoyed since the pension fund was created. In the past, 60 per cent. of the pension fund surplus has been distributed to employers and to the current employees of the pension fund. Therefore, we are proposing no change.

Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen cannot challenge the fact that, in addition to an index-linked fund, 40 per cent. of the surplus will go to pensioners. That is an excellent deal. I know of no other pension fund in the public or private sector that can guarantee such an excellent opportunity.

Do Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen challenge the fact that continued accrued liabilities under the 1980 Act will not continue to benefit the pension fund? There is no doubt about that. Those are accrued liabilities. The payment of cash under that accrued liability depends on the need of the pension fund to pay out index-linked pension payments.

I give my hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh the assurances that he asked for—that discussions with trustees will continue, that the memorandum of understanding will be honoured, that we will seek an agreement with the trustees and that we will seek parliamentary approval of the schedule of payments under the 1980 Act. Indeed, as my hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh knows, the Bill obliges us to lay before the House the comments of the trustees on the conclusions that we reach. There can be no question but that we have dealt honourably, correctly, fairly and well with the pensioners. The Opposition are stirring up trouble unnecessarily.

Finally, in the few remaining minutes, I shall spell out the reason why we have a timetable motion. Yesterday we spent five hours on two groups of amendments. I acknowledge that we were discussing important issues. The first group dealt with management-employee buy-out bids. That is, of course, important, but it was not a new principle, as it is already contained in parts II and III of the Bill. I took seven minutes to respond to that debate whereas the Opposition spent two and a half hours debating what is a narrow issue.

The second group of amendments covered the powers of the franchising director to include in franchises the ability of the train operating companies to access stations. A further two and a half hours were spent on that—if that is not wasting time and filisbustering, I do not know what is.

The truth was revealed this afternoon—the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) let it out of the bag. He asked whether we realised that we could be here all night, every night this week, debating all the amendments. That was not the agreement with the Opposition; the agreement was to allow two days.

I understand that this evening the hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley) released to the press a private record of conversations between me and the chief executive of British Rail. That is disgraceful, because the effect of releasing such a document, which was written not by the Department of Transport but by someone presumably present at that meeting, can only embarrass the chief executive. It is disgraceful——

Mr. Bayley: I do not think that any embarrassment caused by the release of that document will land on the shoulders of the chief executive of British Rail; it will land on those of the Minister, who was told by the chief executive that, in relation to the rail privatisation proposals, he was

"in a hole and still digging".

He told the Minister for Public Transport at that meeting that he would have nothing left but

"a car boot sale. I am not joking."

They were his words.

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Gentleman released a document——

Mr. Prescott: Is it true?

Mr. Freeman: It is typical of the Labour party to conduct debate by releasing such a document.

I commend the motion to the House.

Question put:—

The House divided: Ayes 314, Noes 286.

Division No. 380] **[6.42 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*

Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria

Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Ilsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Trimble, David
Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle and
Mr. Dennis Turner.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved,

That the following provisions shall apply to the remaining proceedings on the Railways Bill:

LORDS AMENDMENTS

1. The proceedings on further Consideration of Lords Amendments shall be completed at this day's sitting and, if not previously brought to a conclusion, shall be brought to a conclusion five hours after the commencement of the adjourned proceedings.

2.—(1) For the purpose of bringing any proceedings to a conclusion in accordance with paragraph 1 above—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided and, if that Question is for the amendment of a Lords Amendment, shall then put forthwith the Question on any further Amendment of the said Lords Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown and on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in the said Lords Amendment or, as the case may be, in the said Lords Amendment as amended;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining Lords Amendments as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown to a Lords Amendment and then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in their Amendment, or as the case may be, in their Amendment as amended;

(ii) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in a Lords Amendment;

(iii) put forthwith, with respect to all of the Amendments designated by the Speaker which have not been disposed of, the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in those Amendments; and

(iv) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Amendments;

(c) as soon as the House has agreed or disagreed with the Lords in any of their Amendments, or disposed of an Amendment relevant to a Lords Amendment which has been disagreed to, the Speaker shall put forthwith a separate Question on any other Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown relevant to that Lords Amendment.

(2) Proceedings under this paragraph shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

STAGES SUBSEQUENT TO FIRST CONSIDERATION OF LORDS AMENDMENTS

3.—(1) The proceedings on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill shall be brought to a conclusion one hour after their commencement.

(2) For the purpose of bringing those proceedings to a conclusion—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided, and shall then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown which is related to the Question already proposed from the Chair;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining items in the Lords Message as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown on any item;

(ii) in the case of each remaining item designated by the Speaker, put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Proposal; and

(iii) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Proposals.

(3) Proceedings under this paragraph shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

SUPPLEMENTAL

4.—(1) The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown—

(a) for the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons; or

(b) for the consideration forthwith of any further Message from the Lords on the Bill.

(2) A Committee appointed to draw up Reasons shall report before the conclusion of the sitting at which it is appointed.

5.—(1) In this paragraph "the proceedings" means proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments, on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill, on the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons and the Report of such a Committee.

(2) Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to the proceedings.

(3) No dilatory Motion with respect to, or in the course of, the proceedings shall be made except by a Minister of the Crown, and the Question on any such Motion shall be put forthwith.

(4) If the House is adjourned, or the sitting is suspended, before the expiry of the period at the end of which any proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion under this Order, no notice shall be required of a Motion made at the next sitting by a Minister of the Crown for varying or supplementing the provisions of this Order.

(5) If the proceedings on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill are interrupted by a Motion for the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 20 (Adjournment on specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration) a period equal to the duration of the proceedings on the Motion shall be added to the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion.

6.58 pm

Mr. Anthony Steen (South Hams): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. May I seek your guidance and help? I have an office in Deans Yard which, as you know, is about a quarter of a mile away from the House. If one travels by car when one hears the Division bell one usually gets help from the police when driving round Parliament square. Apparently, unknown to me, the police have suddenly decided that they will not cover Divisions, so when one gets to the filter light which allows one to get into the Palace there is nobody there to help one through. I nearly missed the vote this evening because of the traffic jamming Parliament square. Secondly, having arrived in New Palace Yard with only seconds to spare, I found that the police have now put out "No Waiting" and "No Parking" signs so that one cannot stop, either. We have a new problem, and I do not know why. Perhaps there are too many rules and regulations, and we need deregulation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): I shall, through Madam Speaker, draw that matter to the attention of the usual channels.

Sir Jerry Wiggin (Weston-super-Mare): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I raised a similar point nearly a week ago. I am sorry to say that, although there has normally been a courteous response to such matters in the past, I have heard nothing, and nothing has changed. My office is in Parliament street where the traffic is extremely busy and the traffic lights can be against pedestrians for up to three minutes. The withdrawal of police support is contrary to the rules of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I have got the message. I have told the House that I will draw it to the attention of the Speaker.

Railways Bill

Lords amendments considered.

Lords amendments Nos. 19 to 30 agreed to. [Some with Special Entry.]

Clause 22

PUBLIC SECTOR OPERATORS NOT TO BE FRANCHISEES

Lords amendment: No. 31, in page 24, line 37, at end insert—

("(1A) Nothing in subsection (1) above shall prevent—
(a) the British Railways Board (in this Act referred to as "the Board"); or
(b) a wholly owned subsidiary of the Board,
from being a franchisee.")

7 pm

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. John MacGregor): I beg to move, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): With this we may consider the following Government amendments in lieu of Lords amendment No. 31: (a), in page 24, line 40, at end insert—

'(3) Subject to the following provisions of this section, subsection (1) above shall not prevent—
(a) the British Railways Board (in this Act referred to as "the Board"), or
(b) a wholly owned subsidiary of the Board,
from being a franchisee.

(4) Subject to the following provisions of this section, whenever the Franchising Director proposes to issue invitations to tender under section 23 below in respect of any particular services for the carriage of passengers by railway, he may, after consultation with the Board and the Regulator, determine that neither the Board nor any wholly owned subsidiary of the Board shall be eligible for inclusion among the persons to whom the invitations are to be issued or who may be selected as the franchisee.

(5) The Franchising Director shall not make a determination under subsection (4) above unless he considers that it is desirable to do so—
(a) for the purpose of promoting competition for franchises;
(b) for the purpose of promoting the award of franchise agreements to companies in which qualifying railway employees have a substantial interest;
(c) for the purpose of encouraging new entry to the passenger railway industry; or
(d) for the purpose of preventing or reducing the dominance of any person or persons in the market for the provision in Great Britain, or in a part of Great Britain, of services for the carriage of passengers by railway.

(6) The Franchising Director shall—
(a) give notice of any determination under subsection (4) above to the Board; and
(b) publish notice of the determination in such manner as he thinks fit.

(7) Nothing in subsection (5) above shall be taken to affect the matters which the Franchising Director may take into account in determining the other persons whom he invites to tender for franchise agreements or whom he selects as franchisees.

(8) No objectives, instructions or guidance shall be given under section 5 above by the Secretary of State to the Franchising Director with respect to the exercise of his functions under this section.

(9) In this section—
"competition for franchises" means competition to become franchisees under franchise agreements;
"encouraging new entry to the passenger railway industry" means encouraging private sector operators who do not currently provide services for the carriage of passengers by railway to commence doing so;
"qualifying railway employees", in the case of any franchise agreement, means persons who are or have been employed in an undertaking which provides or provided the services to which the franchise agreement relates at a time before those services begin to be provided under that franchise agreement.'.

(b), in page 54, line 36, after '20' insert '21, 23'.

(c), in page 72, line 2, at end insert—

'( ) every notice of a determination under section 22(4) above;'.

Mr. MacGregor: As the House knows, we discussed similar issues on Report on 25 May when a Labour amendment along the lines of amendment No. 31 was tabled. The Labour amendment was rejected by a majority of 19 after a lengthy debate. After the Lords amendment tabled by Lord Peyton was passed, I made it clear that the House of Lords was asking us to re-examine the arguments, and that I would wait until the Bill had passed through the other place before I made our position known.

Since the passage of the Lords amendment, we have had detailed discussions with many people, including a number of my hon. Friends, about the issues, and what I am proposing in our amendment is the result. Therefore, I urge that we disagree with the Lords in their amendment and pass our amendment instead.

The House will be aware of our concerns about allowing British Rail to bid for franchises. They are not simply our concerns. They were spelt out many times during the debate on 25 May when I set out our objections, with which the House agreed at that time. The most important concern is that British Rail starts out as the monopoly operator—indeed, the sole operator. Its privileged position, backed by the taxpayer, will discourage other potential franchisees from bidding and make it more difficult for management and employee teams to prepare and support bids for franchises.

With the best will in the world, senior British Rail management are bound to favour their corporate bids at the expense of management-employee buy-outs. Those who want to mount management-employee buy-outs would be hesitant, to put it mildly, about going against senior management in that way.

We already know—my hon. Friend the Minister for Public Transport has talked about this already in our two-day debate—that many managers in British Rail are keen to submit management-employee buy-out bids. However, they have made it known that, if British Rail bids against them, they will have severe difficulties. We need to address that issue. I think that Tory Members and, I hope, the whole House are in favour of encouraging management-employee buy-outs. After the vote yesterday, it is clear that Labour Members are not in favour of encouraging management-employee buy-outs but certainly all Tory Members are.

The second problem is the chaos and confusion that would result—I know that many people in British Rail are concerned about this—if the Lords amendment went through unchanged. Chaos and confusion would arise because, in many cases, the managers who will be asked to submit the British Rail bid will be keen to submit their own bids. Clearly, that is a recipe for complete confusion. To deal with that specific point, a British Rail source is reported in *The Daily Telegraph* yesterday as asking what

would happen if the British Rail Board asks the same people—there is not a limitless supply of experienced managers—to prepare bids on its behalf for the same franchises. It is an impossible conflict of loyalty and will put many managers off altogether. It is not clear at what point the franchise director will step in to rule that a board bid is acceptable or otherwise. Obviously, that comment was made before the Government's amendment had been seen, because our amendment makes clear the point at which the franchising director will step in. He will step in at an early stage to avoid unnecesary and fruitless bids and to clear up the uncertainties to which the source refers.

My third point is that it would be much more difficult to develop a healthy, competitive market in passenger railway services if British Rail were given unfettered discretion to bid for and operate franchises. We need to secure competition between franchisees which means avoiding market dominance by any one operator. That has been the clear purpose of our reforms, and one of the main benefits will come through that competition.

There are problems about transparency in bidding—problems of possibly unfair playing fields, cross subsidies and so on. The point is—I think that many people still misunderstand this with regard to our reforms—that there is no single big bang, no private flotation and no "Sid". Inevitably, the franchises will be granted over a period because the franchise director will be preparing different ones. We have indicated seven franchises that we regard as his priority.

In setting up the franchises, a track record of the separate business operating as a shadow franchise will have to be established so that bidders will be in a reasonable position to prepare bids. Inevitably, that means that not all bids will be happening at once—they will come through gradually. If British Rail is able to compete on each franchise at a different stage, that will increase the risk of unfair competition for bidding. Certainly, everyone who is preparing to bid will think that that is the case.

Mr. Nick Harvey (North Devon): The Secretary of State says that a track record will have to be established on the service that is franchised. Can he clarify whether the managers who are running the shadow franchise and establishing the track record—the same team of managers—will be allowed to bid for the franchise? If so, is there not some incentive for them to ensure that the track record that they develop is as modest as possible so that they have the lowest possible figure for which to bid?

Mr. MacGregor: I do not think that that will be the case. If the hon. Gentleman is suggesting that managers will set out deliberately to run a poor service in order to show that they can improve the service, in that case they will prepare their bids, there will be other bids and they will be compared with the British Rail situation. If all the bids are better than the track record, clearly, the bid that is accepted will improve the situation.

In any case, everyone who is bidding—whether it is a management-employee buy-out or someone else—will do so on the basis of the same known details of the track record. There will be no favourable position in that respect in terms of information for management-employee buy-outs as compared with any other bidder. Therefore, in that sense, it does not matter because everyone will have the same basis of comparison on the track record.

Mr. Harvey: I am grateful to the Secretary of State for that. Is he telling us that the track record is the bid? Surely, at the point at which the bid is submitted, the track record is historic and the bid that is being made by the team is some sort of projection of the future. It may be that, having achieved a perfectly modest record in the period running up to the bid's being made, the team will none the less have a much more imaginative and adventurous business plan to submit. The projection of the future would be compared with bids from the private sector, and the figure that they submit would be based on that. However, the track record could be perfectly modest.

Mr. MacGregor: I thought that the hon. Gentleman would know this, because it has already been debated at great length. The track record of the shadow franchise will not be the bid—it will be the basis on which bids are prepared. Obviously, that will be important for every bidder. The bids will be considered by the franchising director—he will compare the different bids. If the bids are an improvement on the track record, clearly, that will be a factor that he will take into account. That is also something which we will welcome, because, in the competition for franchises, we will be looking for an improvement on the historic record.

I believe that the real issue is the other way round. I understand from discussions that we have had that a number of management-employee buy-outs are aware of the potential for increasing revenue, making savings and improving efficiency. They will submit a bid that will be a good deal better than the track record for different reasons, not the reasons given by the hon. Member for North Devon (Mr. Harvey).

The Government have always said that if the franchising director is not satisfied with any of the bids, for whatever reason, and he feels that British Rail's track record while operating a shadow franchise gives better value for money, he will not grant any of the bids and British Rail will continue to operate as it has done. I hope that that makes the position clear.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): It does not.

Mr. MacGregor: I know that the hon. Gentleman does not understand, but he has not been following it.

All the indications that we have had since the Lords amendment was incorporated in the Bill suggest that our concerns were and are justified. Potential bidders, including bidders for management-employee buy-outs, have made it clear that they would be deterred from bidding if BR were given complete freedom to bid for franchises. I know that my hon. Friends agree with those concerns.

The Government amendment in lieu of Lords amendment No. 31 resolves those difficulties. I pay particular tribute to my hon. Friend the Member for Ashford (Sir K. Speed). He has taken a close interest in these matters throughout and approached them in a constructive spirit, as have other of my hon. Friends. We have achieved a satisfactory outcome, which meets his concerns and those that the Government have always expressed. I regret that my hon. Friend cannot be here today owing to illness, but I hope that we will see him back shortly.

The Government amendment preserves the wording of amendment No. 31, and the Government accept that BR should be eligible to be a franchisee. We are, of course,

[Mr. MacGregor]

asking the House to reject amendment No. 31 and to replace it with the Government amendment. That is a technicality—it is a way of achieving the passage of the Government amendment—but the whole of the original measure from the House of Lords is preserved in the Government amendment.

The Government amendment puts certain confinements on BR's eligibility, and addresses the concerns that I have listed. It gives the franchising director a power to determine that BR should not be invited to bid for a particular franchise in certain circumstances. The franchising director may exclude BR from bidding, but only when he considers it desirable to do so in the interests of promoting management and employee bids or competitions for franchises, encouraging new entry into the industry or preventing or reducing market dominance in the provision of passenger railway services.

The question whether to invite BR to bid will be left to the discretion of the franchising director. He will have responsibiliy for the entire franchising process, an important part of which involves having effective competition at the franchising stage wherever possible. It is right that he should be the person to decide whether to invite BR to bid for particular franchises.

Mr. Cryer: Why? It is crackers.

Mr. MacGregor: He will do so at the pre-qualification stage, before notices to tender go out and before people have to prepare bids. That is important in order to give the certainty that was asked for by the BR source, and to prevent unnecessary expenditure on the preparation of bids on a false basis.

Subsection (9) in amendment (a) makes it clear that the Secretary of State will not be able to give objectives, guidance and instructions to the franchising director in the exercise of his powers to determine that BR should not be invited to bid. I know that some people regard that as an important part of the amendment, because it guarantees the franchising director's independence.

The amendment does not affect BR's role in operating passenger services until they are franchised. Should the franchising director decide not to accept any of the bids in response to his invitations to tender, BR will continue to operate that particular service.

On Report on 25 May, I argued that the amendment from the other place was unnecessary because there was a fundamental basis on which other bids could be assessed —BR's operating track record. If none of the other bids was regarded as satisfactory because they did not give better value for money, BR would continue to operate that particular service.

Ms Glenda Jackson (Hampstead and Highgate): In that instance, would the BR bid receive the same subsidy that a private franchisee would receive, or would BR still have to operate its services with its present subsidy?

Mr. MacGregor: That would be a matter for the franchising director. He would have to look at what subsidies were being bid for by the franchisees. The intention is that it would continue as before, but the issue of subsidy at that point would be a matter for the franchising director.

Mr. Brian Wilson (Cunninghame, North): The Secretary of State seemed to say that if British Rail became a franchisee, it would have the same length of franchise as any other franchisee, and the appearance of another interest in a particular service would not overtake the allocation of BR's franchise for the whole of the franchise period. Is that correct?

7.15 pm

Mr. MacGregor: That is more or less correct. It is a point which I will come on to later.

I am talking about a situation in which the franchising director decides that there are no viable bids, or no bids that give value for money. In such a situation, he would reject all the bids, and British Rail would continue to operate the service.

There is concern about the uncertainty that this might create for BR managers and staff, who will need to know where they stand in order to plan the operation of their services. For that reason, and having regard to BR's need to motivate its staff and to deliver services, I intend to include in the objectives, instructions and guidance that I will give to the franchising director a requirement that he should allow a reasonable period of time to elapse before initiating a new competition. It will be for the franchising director to decide how long that period should be. That point is covered in the second draft of the guidance to the franchising director, which is available in the Library. It is still a draft, and no doubt it will be subject to changes.

I will also incorporate in the guidance to the franchising director guidance on the assessment of bids from BR in cases in which he decides that BR should be allowed to bid. That is also contained in the draft guidance in the Library. The franchising director will have to ensure that BR's bids are assessed fairly, taking into account BR's position as the only public-sector body allowed to be a franchisee and the incumbent operator of the services to be franchised.

I will expect the franchising director to attach great weight to BR's record in providing the services in question, and to take account of the value of transferring risk from the public to the private sector. That will achieve the level playing field and the transparency.

The amendment giving the franchising director power to exclude BR from bidding will ensure that the interests of competition are properly safeguarded in the process of deciding who should be invited to bid for franchises. The guidance that I will give the franchising director will ensure that when BR does bid, its bids are properly and fairly assessed. That should reassure potential private-sector bidders that, despite BR's dominant position, there will be a level playing field.

As I have said, the amendment gives the franchising director a discretionary power to prevent BR from bidding when he considers that desirable for well-defined reasons. I cannot say how he will exercise that discretion, because the amendment also prevents me from giving him any guidance or exercising any power over his use of that discretion. In the terms of this amendment, there will be cases where BR will be given the opportunity to bid, although it will be for BR to decide whether to do so.

The Lords amendment makes a material change, even with the amendments that I propose. It will mean that a BR franchise will run for the period of the franchise, as distinct from the BR franchisee's being the residuary operator where there is no successful bidder. I hope that answers the

hon. Gentleman's question. We intend to respond to the marketplace and the depth of the bids, and therefore the length of the franchises will differ.

Clause 106 provides that it shall be the principal objective of the Secretary of State, in exercising his powers in clauses 77 to 90 of the Bill, to secure

"as soon as . . . is reasonably practicable the result that the function of providing railway services in Great Britain is performed by private sector operators."

That objective, as has been clear from the outset, applies to all railway services, including Railtrack, BR Railfreight, BR franchises and other BR-owned activities, including infrastructure companies, but the objective applies only as soon as is reasonably practicable and it is qualified by a wide range of other factors in subsection (2) to which the Secretary of State is required to have regard. Those include maintaining efficiency, economy and safety of operation in the provision of railway services and securing that any disposal takes place on favourable financial terms.

I could have said more about things that were said yesterday, but, to ensure that we get on with debating the amendment, which I know is of great interest to the House, I shall forbear from doing so. I shall simply conclude by saying that Lord Peyton's original amendment would have created chaos and confusion in BR and among management buy-outs and would have discouraged competition for franchises, which will secure better deals for passengers, taxpayers and employees.

Our amendment strikes a proper balance between allowing BR to be a franchisee where that is appropriate, and ensuring that BR's dominant position does not prevent the development of private sector interest in franchised passenger services. It is workable in a way in which the House of Lords amendment in its present form would not be, and I commend the Government amendment to the House.

Mr. Wilson: It is a supreme irony for the Secretary of State for chaos and confusion, the architect of this massive, unwanted disruption of our railway network, to accuse Lord Peyton, that benign figure at the other end of the corridor, of seeking to cause chaos and confusion in British Rail with his amendment. It is an exact mirror image of the truth; the Government are responsible for the chaos and the confusion that will be caused by the Bill.

This is a key series of amendments. The Lords amendment would give British Rail the right to bid. It started its life as the Adley amendment and it would be remiss not to recognise the late Member for Christchurch's view of it. Robert Adley said:

"It is a bit odd to say that the only people who will not be allowed to bid to run the trains is the only organisation in Britain that actually has any experience of running trains—namely, British Rail."

That was true when Robert Adley said it, and it is true now. The absurdity that he highlighted was gross then, it is gross now, and nothing that the Secretary of State has said tonight erodes that fundamental absurdity. What has been stitched up as a deal with Conservative Back Benchers is the Government's internal affair, but the rest of the House and the country know that it is not a compromise but a buy-off, and that it is a buy-off for an extremely low price.

Until last week, there seemed to be reasonably widespread agreement throughout the Chamber on the principle that Robert Adley enunciated, and which had carried on life as the Peyton-Marsh amendment. That agreement has now collapsed due to the so-called Tory rebels' undignified retreat, which was as predictable as it is risible.

We are left with a contradiction. Yes, British Rail will be allowed to bid, but only if the franchise director can find no one else to bid against it. If he can, British Rail will be sent off into undignified retreat as the operator of last resort.

That is not fair competition; it is a rigged perversion of competition. It is deeply contemptuous of British Rail, its managers and its work force. British Rail will be left as the provider of last resort when no one else wants to run a service. The Minister, when it suits him, admits that, for a long time to come, a large part of the British rail network will remain in the hands of British Rail, but it will be in the hands of British Rail under the conditions which the amendment to the amendment seeks to impose, in which British Rail has been categorised as the provider of last resort, in the full knowledge that the opinion of the Government is that, if it can be got rid of, it will be got rid of.

I recognise a small advance in that. I have no doubt that, when the Government set out on this course, they intended to abolish British Rail altogether and to leave it running no trains at all. They have been on a collision course with reality because of the modicum of private sector interest that exists and also the massive cost in subsidy, which we now know a little more about, that will be needed if private operators are to be interested. They recognise now that British Rail will not go away and that it will still have a usefulness, but in a role which no other party and no other Government would dream of according the state railway company. We should be investing in and developing British Rail so that it gives us a railway to be proud of, integrated within the public sector, as exists in other continental countries.

What the Secretary of State is doing in this amendment is deeply contemptuous not only of British Rail but also of the British taxpayer. The Secretary of State is saying that, even if British Rail is the most effective potential bidder —in fact, especially if British Rail is the most effective potential bidder against a private interest—it will be excluded from competing in order to clear the way for that private bidder. There will be no competition.

Mr. MacGregor *indicated dissent.*

Mr. Wilson: The Secretary of State shakes his head, but it is my understanding that, where that is likely to exist, British Rail will be disqualified from bidding. Irrespective of how little subsidy British Rail seeks to operate a particular franchise, if a private operator who might be asking for a great deal more subsidy is available, British Rail will be excluded and the money will go to the private operator. That is why we begin to realise that a huge increase in subsidy will be required to hold the network together.

The figures that we discussed the other day did not take account of train operators' profit. They envisaged the daft circular movement of everyone paying everyone else profit —the economic charges, plus 8 per cent. return. The figures did not take account of the train operators' profits. It is at that point, when the private operators are brought into that circle, if they ever exist, that the cost of subsidy,

[Mr. Wilson]

if the existing network is to be maintained, will go through the roof, even beyond the £2 billion a year which is being discussed now.

If British Rail were allowed to bid for every franchise, and came in as the lowest tenderer in every franchise, the country would ask why British Rail should not operate every franchise, because in aggregate the cost to the taxpayer would be massively less than the alternative, which is to fragment the railway, to cosset the private sector and, in each of those franchises where there is an interest, to pay the operators more in order to operate the services.

The Secretary of State, in defence of that point, argues against the concept of cross-subsidy. Cross-subsidy is a good idea; we owe an awful lot of our public services to it. In arguing against cross-subsidy in order to disqualify British Rail from bidding, the Secretary of State gives the show away. If British Rail were allowed to compete for every one of those 25 train operating companies, and if it were able to win every one of those franchises, obviously it would not be on the basis of cross-subsidy because British Rail would have had to make the appropriate bid in each and every case. Cross-subsidy enters the argument only when one is dealing with two or three of those franchises, not when one is dealing with all of them.

If there were any logic in what the Secretary of State is doing, and if there were any interest in giving the taxpayer the best deal, it would be put to the test: British Rail would be allowed to bid for every one of those franchises. The Secretary of State understands and fears above all that British Rail would probably win all, or nearly all, the franchises, which would be the best deal for the British taxpayer.

Mr. MacGregor: The hon. Gentleman totally ignores two points: first, as I made clear, the franchises will not all go out at one and the same time, but will be staggered substantially; and secondly that the franchising director will know the operating track record of British Rail during the period beforehand as a separate business—the shadow franchise, in other words. He will therefore have a benchmark, a comparison, with which to compare the bids, and if he does not think that he is getting value for money for the bids, he will not grant them.

Mr. Wilson: The point about staggering is irrelevant; in fact, it supports my case, because, if the Government's policy is pursued, ultimately all the lines would go out to franchise. Eventually, cross-subsidising would catch up with British Rail, because it would not be able to bid effectively for the later franchises. It is not true—British Rail would win the franchises not by cross-subsidising but because, as Robert Adley said, it is the only organisation in Britain with any experience of running the railways.

I am sorry, but what was the Secretary of State's second point?

7.30 pm

Mr. MacGregor: The franchising director will always know British Rail's track record of operating as the shadow franchise. He will be able to make that comparison, and, if he does not think that the bidders offer value for money, he will not award them the contract, so the shadow franchise will be converted into British Rail operating the franchise.

Incidentally, the hon. Gentleman is quite wrong about the £2 billion, and therefore about subsidies. He has completely misunderstood the basis for that figure. It comes from a report which is only a working document and which I have never seen. There are many models, and it is ridiculous to place such weight on that one. His argument about subsidy and value for money is undermined by the very process that the franchising director will go through.

Mr. Wilson: I certainly understood, from his reaction on television, that the Secretary of State had never seen the document in question. It was produced at the highest level by his officials and spells out the cost of subsidy during the next year. I have no doubt that, now that the document has come out, some formula will be found for disguising the figures, but essentially it spells out in great detail that more taxpayers' money will be needed in the system to make the thing work. That is the lesson to be learned from the document, and it is also common sense if anyone looks at this legislation.

Mr. MacGregor: Let me make it quite clear that I did not know about the report when I was confronted with it on television on Sunday, because there are a large number of documents from working groups at various levels. Naturally, one asks for different models of the way in which one can achieve a more commercial basis for the system. I think that that report was the 79th document from that working group. The hon. Gentleman is creating a great myth on the basis of very little, as he so often does.

Mr. Wilson: Frankly, if I were the Secretary of State I would think that some questions needed to be asked when my Department produced a document that concluded that "the central Government grant requirement would total about £2 billion in 1994-95, assuming an 8 per cent. return for Railtrack", if the officials had got it wrong to the nearest billion, irrespective of the level at which the report was prepared. If he likes, he can tell us the level of the document and whether that statement is wrong. It is not my statement, however—it comes from his Department, which says that it will cost £2 billion next year to make this show operate, without running a single extra train or carrying a single extra passenger.

Mr. MacGregor: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Wilson: Yes, we will bow to experience.

Mr. MacGregor: The hon. Gentleman has completely misunderstood. If I remember correctly, I think that the report says, "by way of illustration". It is a model. The fact is that we are studying various models. That document was illustrating one way in which certain factors, which have all yet to be decided, could be worked through in the system. It is wrong to make any deductions from it about the level of subsidy next year.

The hon. Gentleman, among others, has made all sorts of suggestions on previous occasions about Network SouthEast fare increases. I have always said that we should wait until the announcement. I suggest that the hon. Gentleman would be well advised to do so, rather than building his position on a working document when many other such documents are being worked through.

Mr. Wilson: We need not prolong this argument. As the Secretary of State says, it will all come out in the wash. I am surprised, however, that he should build his case on fare increases. What sort of Government do laps of honour

when fare increases are restricted to four or five times the rate of inflation, after Government intervention to hold them down? I am talking about Network SouthEast and the 8 or 9 per cent. increase in the travelcard. I do not regard that as a great triumph, and that increase was after intervention. Suppressing such increases would have to be paid for one way or another. British Rail has been left with that problem.

We have wandered off the point slightly. Let me return to the subject of ghost bids, to which I think the Secretary of State referred. We are invited to believe that the franchise director will consider British Rail's operations, once the vast superstructure for privatisation has been set up, and will work out what it costs British Rail to run each franchise area. He will then say that, if the private sector cannot do it for less, there will not even be a competition and British Rail will carry on. Is that probable? Is some guy appointed by the Secretary of State going to study BR's costs and call the whole thing off because, having looked at it objectively, he has decided that there is no way that the private sector could do it more cheaply? I do not believe it. The Secretary of State does not believe it. It is a total fiction to parade to the House.

The Secretary of State's political direction to the franchise director will be that he should get some franchises going this side of the next general election, but only the safe ones—the ones at which money can be thrown and which will cause the Government no political embarrassment. I do not think that they exist; we are beginning to see that from the Gatwick express, which is supposed to be the easiest of them all.

Political direction will occur at every stage. The franchise director will be told what to franchise, to cut out British Rail and to skew subsidy in the early years towards private operation, to give the Secretary of State the sort of political cover that he obviously so much requires.

I know that many of my hon. Friends want to speak and I think that Conservative Members have some explaining to do, so I do not want to take too long on the subject, but the myth of management buy-out must be challenged whenever it occurs. The Secretary of State may be a magician but he is not entitled to set himself up as a ventriloquist, to speak for people who are not allowed to speak for themselves, and to misrepresent them. That is a disgrace.

I do not know what precise proportion of BR's management are interested in buy-outs, but I know that, according to the only survey of opinion undertaken, 92 per cent. of senior railway managers are opposed to rail privatisation. It may be a little more, or a little less, but there is not one shred of evidence from which the Secretary of State can adduce, or even try to adduce, that a majority or even a substantial body of railway managers are positively in favour of rail privatisation and want to be involved in buy-outs.

Ninety-two per cent. of rail managers replying to the survey were opposed to privatisation; 77 per cent. were in favour of British Rail retaining the ability to bid for franchises. Seventy-seven per cent. of managers are still in favour of the very amendment that we are discussing. Tory Back Benchers—to whom the railway managers appealed —will betray them on that amendment.

Let it not be said that the amendment has been tabled in the name of railway managers, because it is not true. The Government are looking for a minority of railway managers who, from zeal or fears for their jobs and prospects, will become involved in the buy-outs. It is a disgrace to misrepresent railway managers by suggesting that they are behind the proposal. It astonishes me. No, it does not astonish me, as nothing that this lot does can astonish me. In the light of the figures, the Secretary of State glibly pretends that Government proposals are intended to support railway managers.

Railway managers may be the front men—we discussed last night how they might be used by private sector interests as a way in. A handful of managers may be involved, but how long will they remain involved? I know that the Secretary of State and the Minister attend conferences on rail privatisation, as I do—a great new industry has been created. I am sure that they are as familiar as I am with the advice given by financial interests to potential management buy-outs. I am sure that they are also as familiar with the term "exiting", which is used at such conferences, when railway managers are told, "Yes, get in there, make your money and then exit within three to five years. Sell on to the full private sector." That is the strategy urged on railway managers by the financial backers and the interested parties who will eventually take over those companies.

The idea that there is widespread enthusiasm among railway managers to make it their life's work to run private railways is false. The Minister knows what happened in other industries. Let us consider what happened to the bus industry where buy-outs occurred—within a few years, financial pressures and the anxiety to make a fast buck led to companies being sold on. I make no distinction between management buy-outs and full privatisation, because they are ultimately exactly the same. The only substantial difference in most cases is that a small number of pockets are well lined. That provides a heavy incentive for managers to become involved initially.

The extraordinary tribute to managers' commitment to the public railway can be seen in the figures. In spite of the bribe, 91 per cent. of railway managers are opposed to the suggestion. The Secretary of State said that there was

"not a limitless supply of experienced managers".

He has got something right. Of course there is not a limitless supply; in fact, there is a distinctly limited supply.

What will happen while the wonderful management buy-outs bids are being prepared? We understand that managers involved in the bids will have to separate themselves from British Rail while the bids are put together for a period of six months, or perhaps even 12 months—*[Interruption.]* The Minister can correct me if I am wrong.

Mr. Freeman: Later.

Mr. Wilson: Who will run the railway from the moment that the bids are put together? If the bids do not succeed—there is no guarantee that they will—what will happen to the railway managers who have separated themselves from British Rail in order to put their bids together? Will they return to oust the people who have run the public railway while they have been away putting together their bids? The scheme is a recipe for conflict and division, and will sap morale. Some people will be seen to be trying to feather their own nests, while others will be left with the job of running the public railway. That is what the Government are doing to the railways, and it is already having a huge effect on the morale of those who work in that industry.

[Mr. Wilson]

The Secretary of State is right to say that there is not a limitless supply of experienced managers. Where will those private interested parties, who are supposed to be waiting in the wings, find the supply of railway managers to run the industry? When bus companies and other interests enter the market, they may want to recruit from the existing pool of railway managers, but at that stage not even the Secretary of State will be able to dragoon railway managers to work for them. At present, there is a large haemorrhage of experienced railway managers because they despise what is being done to their industry. That haemorrhage will increase.

The Secretary of State must bear in mind the fact that there will not be a limitless supply of experienced managers. He will leave us with a railway from which many of the most experienced people have gone. The inevitable corollary of that is that the running of the railway will be left in the hands of inexperienced people, which will have serious implications.

I am curious about the line that market dominance will exclude British Rail from bids. The Government are in the process of setting up private monopolies throughout the country. No matter which company wins the franchise, it will have a monopoly—whether it be British Rail or any other company. If only one operator runs a franchise—which will be the reality for a long time, even under the Government's scheme—that operator has market dominance. To say that British Rail cannot bid because to do so would give it market dominance is nonsense. If the Government have an explanation, I will be interested to hear it.

7.45 pm

I question whether fixing the scheme against British Rail and talking up management buy-outs is legal under European law. That issue was authoritatively raised in the House of Lords by Lord Clinton-Davis. In our contacts with the European Commission, we have been advised that it would certainly want to consider that issue. The notion that competition can be twisted to push one potential operator and discount another is ridiculous. Perhaps that could be done in the good old days of market rigging, but there is now European law to be taken into account. The words of Lord Clinton-Davis in the House of Lords will be actively pursued by the Labour party, which wants answers to various questions.

The subject should be of interest to my friends and colleagues from Ulster, who were present earlier. The Government may try to tell them that the Bill contains nothing relevant to Northern Ireland. We know that emissaries were sent to try to buy their votes a few weeks ago. There is a consultants' report on the future of Northern Ireland Railways. Despite several parliamentary questions, the Government have refused to publish that report. If they go ahead with the Bill, there is every reason to believe that Northern Ireland Railways would be next in line, as well as any other bits and pieces of railways around the country. The precedent of not allowing the operator to bid would presumably apply in each of those cases. The implications for Northern Ireland do not have to be spelled out.

The scheme is not a compromise; it is not an effort to satisfy the reasonable demand to give British Rail the right to bid. It is a fix against British Rail and cossets the private sector, which may turn out not to exist. There are minimal signs of genuine private sector interest. British Rail will continue to operate the great majority of services in this country. After a change of Government, British Rail will once again operate all the services in this country. In the meantime, what damage will be done to the morale and fabric of British Rail? The Government's performance over the issue, particularly the amendment, has been tawdry. They may have bought off the Tory rebels, but not opinion in the country.

Mr. Tim Rathbone (Lewes): If the speech of the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) was meant to be a short speech that left lots of time for colleagues on both sides of the House to make their own contributions, I am glad that we were not blessed with a long speech from the hon. Member.

I am extremely glad to have caught your eye, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as it gives me the opportunity to put my oar into the debate not just only on my behalf, but on behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for Ashford (Sir K. Speed) who, as my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State said earlier, is unfortunately extremely unwell and unable to be with us today.

My hon. Friend the Member for Ashford and I are grateful to my right hon. Friend for seeking to address the concerns that a number of us have expressed. Our worries relate to ensuring the fundamental direction of the Bill and what it is meant to do. The Bill is intended to improve the service offered to customers by railways and to offer value for money both to passengers and to taxpayers.

There has been much press and public comment on the subject of Lords amendment No. 31, the so-called Peyton amendment, to allow the British Railways Board or a wholly owned subsidiary of the board to become a franchisee. Since the amendment of Lord Peyton—no shrinking violet—was accepted in another place, a number of colleagues and I have argued in favour of the amendment to improve the denationalisation Bill.

I am delighted and grateful that my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State and the Minister for Public Transport have accepted that principle and tabled a Government amendment on the issue, in the same positive way as they have reacted to other suggestions that we have made over recent weeks and months.

As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State said earlier, it is essential to have a level playing field for all potential franchisees, be they from the private sector, management-employee buy-outs or the British Railways Board. British Rail managers with whom I and my hon. Friends have spoken, including those employees who wish to mount management-employee buy-outs, have stressed that they want only a level playing field, not a built-in advantage. They merely want to be able to compete for the franchise equally and fairly. They did not want the Peyton amendment overturned.

I understand the managers' concern. I believe that anyone with any business experience would understand their concern, because railway franchises will inevitably be a risky business. The companies will employ staff and have contracts perhaps for only five or seven years, although I was pleased to hear my right hon. Friend state on television last weekend that the contracts could go up to 15 years or even more.

The companies will not own many assets. The trains will be leased and the track, signalling and stations will be owned by Railtrack or by franchisees for those stations. They will avoid much capital debt, but will lack also the

financial security that those assets would otherwise bring. Their business will be largely specified by the franchising director, heavily regulated and yet subject to the fierce competition of car, coach and air, which British Rail faces now, and which any rail operator will face in the future. As demand for rail travel rises or falls in line with the economy, even when business is bad the operator will still have to meet the obligations given to the franchising director when the original bid was made, so of course new operators need the sort of encouragement that my right hon. Friend proposes in his amendment.

I know that my right hon. and hon. Friends will welcome the view of potential management-employee buy-outs that they merely want a level playing field. It demonstrates that they are already embracing the free market principles of fair and equal competition. That was referred to at length during our debate on the guillotine motion this afternoon. They understand that in that way the railway will change for the better and will offer a better service and, crucially, better value for money.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has assured me that those are his objectives, too; and I believe him when he says that those are the objectives behind the amendment that stands in his name. I welcome those assurances and the stands that he has taken.

I much regret the comments made by Opposition Members and their supporters outside the House who are seeking to undermine and rubbish the Government's proposals with rumours and innuendo worthy of a Machiavelli, which are thereby causing a lot of quite unnecessary worry among present rail users and present rail pensioners. That was the context in which I made some comments earlier this afternoon.

The Bill is complex. I want to try to help Opposition Members and perhaps my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State by inviting him to take this opportunity to give the House once again the assurances that he has given me and my hon. Friends. The first concerns a small point that was raised by the hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley) towards the end of the debate on the guillotine motion. It is to do with the future right of British Rail's museums to the artefacts, free and clear of any cost in the future, as it has been given that right in the past. That matter has been raised before in the Chamber.

I had the opportunity of raising the matter in the last few words of the last speech before my right hon. Friend summed up on Third Reading. It has been touched on in the House of Lords and I believe that reassurances can be given—I hope that reassurances can be given—even though it has not been written into the Bill. Whether it becomes the responsibility of the franchising director in a similar way to that in which he becomes responsible for stations that are franchised individually, or some other responsibility, I believe that we should have some reassurance as to the present rights of that magnificent British Rail museum.

Returning specifically to the amendments, which I know that you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will want me to do, paragraph (4) of Government amendment (a) permits—I emphasise the word "permits"—the franchising director in certain circumstances to determine that neither the British Railways Board, nor a wholly owned subsidiary, shall be allowed to bid for a franchise.

There is no requirement on the franchising director to do that. He can act only under the specific circumstances set out in the amendment. As my right hon. Friend has told us, those circumstances are designed to ensure a level playing field. He said that in his opening words and I believe that he should say it again when he sums up. He should go on to say that provision of quality of service and value for money are indeed the overwhelming reasons why a particular franchise will be granted.

I understand it to be the Government's intention that the franchising director would exercise those powers to that end and to no other. Were that not to be the case, I am sure that the Public Accounts Committee would soon be examining the activities of the franchising director. I hope that my right hon. Friend will therefore confirm to the House that that will be the case and that the franchising director as accounting officer will be required to come before the Public Accounts Committee to justify his actions in terms of seeking the maximum value for the public money for which he is accountable.

Mr. David Nicholson (Taunton): As a member of the Public Accounts Committee, I am encouraged by what my hon. Friend has said in that regard. Does he agree that decisions by the franchising director, which might be controversial, might be open to judicial review?

Mr. Rathbone: I agree with that and I will come to that point in just a few moments.

I particularly welcome the requirement on the franchising director to promote competition for franchises. I hope that my right hon. Friend will confirm to the House that, in most cases, that will require the inclusion of British Rail in the bidding process to promote competition and to provide the benchmark against which new entrants to the Rail industry will and can be judged.

I must tell the House, however, that I was concerned about the reference in the amendment to

"preventing or reducing the dominance of any person or persons".

That is a highly judgmental factor and one which, if abused, could give the franchising director carte blanche to buy bids by the British Railways board willy-nilly. *[Interruption.]* If hon. Members on the Opposition Benches would stay comfortably quiet, I should be most grateful.

It seems to me that, in the absence of open access competition, every franchise operator will be a monopoly provider of rail services within his area and therefore dominant, except in a limit number of cases such as Gatwick Express. In my constituency of Lewes, the local franchisee is certainly likely to be the only operator.

I have the assurance of my right hon. Friend that it is not his intention to use that provision universally to bar British Rail from bidding. It is difficult to understand how paragraph (5)(d) of his amendment will operate. I hope that he will be able to give the House an indication of what is meant by the word "dominance".

I was considerably reassured by a letter that I have received from Sir Bob Reid in answer to questions that I put to him. He indicates a proper approach to that sensitive issue. It is clear that British Rail will be prepared to submit to proper scrutiny of any of its bids; that it will do so in co-operation with the Government; and that it accepts as a minimum requirement a robust accountancy system to prevent subsidy leakage. That is being built into the restructuring which is already in hand.

A crucial part of the Government's amendments is the requirement for the franchising director to publish his decisions. That will allow them—here I come to the point

[Mr. Rathbone]

raised by my hon. Friend—to be tested in court if necessary by way of application for judicial review. As my right hon. Friend has told me, that is a vital safeguard if the franchising director is to be given the power to bar British Rail from bidding.

I am advised, however, that it would be difficult for aggrieved bidders successfully to petition for leave for judicial review if the franchising director has not given the reasons for his decision. I hope, therefore, that my right hon. Friend will be able to give the House some comfort on that point. He may be unwilling to include such a requirement on the face of the Bill, but I hope that he will be able to give the House an assurance that the franchising director will give reasons for his decisions when he takes them, and not just in his annual report.

I have one further concern relating to those cases where, despite the franchising director seeking bids, he is unable to appoint a suitable franchisee and British Rail remains the operator. In those cases, it is my view, and the view of many of my right hon. and hon. Friends, that such an arrangement should be in force for the franchise period.

8 pm

In his draft objectives for the franchising director my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has recognised the importance of the effect on morale and the need for a period of stability. But those draft objectives refer only to a reasonable period of time before seeking potential franchisees again and, if I heard him correctly, my right hon. Friend used exactly the same phraseology in his opening speech today.

My concern is that those continuing the running of difficult services or taking over unpopular franchises should be rewarded with a degree of stability. As a result of the changes that my right hon. Friend has agreed to the Bill, British Rail will be long-term operators and not just caretakers. I hope that my right hon. Friend will be able to reassure me and the House that the final version of his objectives for the franchising director will be more specific on that point and establish that such continuing British Rail operations will be at least for the length of the franchise period on offer.

Perhaps the most important feature of my right hon. Friend's amendment, on which I particularly congratulate him, is subsection (8) where he removes any question of his being able to direct the franchising director in these matters. If, therefore, the franchising director is to bar British Rail from bidding, the decision will be his and his alone after consultation with the regulator and the British Railways Board.

However, I have heard it said that that subsection prevents the Secretary of State from directing the franchise director only in that specific context, a point which I believe my right hon. Friend also made in his opening speech today. It has been alleged by others that the Secretary of State could use other powers of direction within the Bill effectively to ensure that British Rail would not be awarded a franchise if any other bids were made.

The argument runs that the Secretary of State could direct that another bid be awarded the franchise. It has been argued that the amendment to clause 4, which was successfully moved in another place by my noble Friend the Earl of Caithness, the Minister for Aviation and Shipping, would place a duty on the Secretary of State to direct the franchising director to accept MEBO bids above all others.

I have my right hon. Friend's assurance that that is not his intention, but, if he will excuse me, Secretaries of State tend to come and go, and nowhere more frequently than in the Department of Transport. I am sure, therefore, that the House would welcome some reassurance that the powers contained in the Bill should not be interpreted in that way.

In that context also, I remain concerned that the franchising director must submit to the Secretary of State for approval any proposal to offer vertically integrated franchises wherever those seem appropriate even though any such proposal can be made only with Railtrack's agreement. Therefore, I hope that the final objectives will delete that requirement as well as clarifying the previous requirement to which I have referred.

I return briefly to the crucial issue with which I started—that the Bill and my right hon. Friend's amendment have the sole intention of achieving value for money and quality of service through fair and equal competition between all those who bid for franchises, so that the best future operator wins each of the franchises, so that in turn much needed increased investment is made to improve services, particularly in such areas as the Kent coast line serving the constituents of my hon. Friend the Member for Ashford, the south coast central franchise area and the Sussex coast services which serve my constituents.

I know that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will be able to confirm that and give the assurances that I invited him to state, and I am confident that those assurances from my right hon. Friend will enable my right hon. Friends to join me in supporting the Government amendment.

Mr. Keith Hill (Streatham): The hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) did the House a service, about which the Government will not be unduly perturbed, when he highlighted a central contradiction in the Government's amendment in his reference to subsection (5)(d). This will not be an open access railway. In granting franchises, the franchising director will inevitably be conferring not merely dominance in a particular railway but a monopoly in the railway. When proposals were put forward for the deregulation of the buses, it was precisely because the Government were worried about the potential abuse by franchisees that they rejected the concept of franchises in connection with buses.

On many occasions in the Select Committee on Transport and the Standing Committee which considered the Bill, we have drawn attention to documentation published in the mid-1980s which demonstrated the anxieties of departmental officials that the franchisee would capture the franchiser. The argument is that, in due course, railway passengers will pay the penalty for the situation that the Government are establishing.

However, that is not the main burden of my remarks this evening. Initially at least, I wish to pursue a line of questioning raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) about the compatibility of the Government's amendments in relation to our obligations under the treaty of Rome.

The Secretary of State, who has just left his place, will doubtless be aware that those matters were raised by my noble Friend Lord Clinton-Davies, himself a former Commissioner, which adds authority to the reservations

that he expressed in another place on this matter. Even the most sympathetic perusal of the record reveals that the Minister for Aviation and Shipping in the other place was unable to supply anything approaching an adequate response to the issues raised by my noble Friend Lord Clinton-Davis.

"There is no doubt that the Government's amendments confer a privileged position to management-employee bids for franchises. There can be no other interpretation of the words:

"for the purpose of promoting the award of franchise agreements to companies in which qualifying railway employees have a substantial interest".

Those words confer rather more than a level playing field to the advantage of MEBOs in these approaching bids.

However, there are potential objections to the Government's proposals under three heads of European Community legislation. Article 7 of the treaty states:

"Within the scope of application of this Treaty, and without prejudice to any special provisions contained therein, any discrimination on grounds of nationality shall be prohibited."

It is at least arguable that the present provisions put forward by the Government implicitly discriminate in favour of nationality. It is certainly an argument that merits a response.

Article 85 of the treaty defines as having the effect of prevention, restriction or distortion or competition within the Common Market, and therefore in contravention of the treaty, agreements, decisions and concerted practices which

"apply dissimilar conditions to equivalent transactions with other trading parties, thereby placing them at a competitive disadvantage".

It is certainly arguable that another potential franchisee could take exception to the preference offered to a MEBO and it is hardly satisfactory for the Government to reply, as did the noble Earl of Caithness, that the Government would seek an exemption under article 85, paragraph 3. That power might be sought by the Government, but do they have any grounds to believe that it is likely to be granted? In other words, are there grounds to believe that the provision is compatible with the treaty?

I draw the Minister's attention to article 90 of the treaty, which states:

"In the case of public undertakings and undertakings to which Member States grant special or exclusive rights Member States shall neither enact nor maintain in force any measure contrary to the rules contained in this Treaty."

That relates in particular to the rules provided for in article 7, which I have quoted, and in articles 85 to 94 to which I have referred.

The Government amendments place MEBOs in a privileged position and that privilege will be enshrined in statute. There is no doubt that the statutory provision could be used in evidence against the interests of the MEBO. These matters should have been subject to serious consideration before the Government drew up their amendments. I wonder whether they seriously investigated the implications of the proposals in light of our treaty obligations. Did they consult the Commission? Are the Government sure that their proposals meet our treaty obligations? If they did not consult the Commission, and if they are not entirely sure that they have met the treaty obligations, is it not improper to ask the House to approve the amendments? Should not the amendments be withdrawn?

If the Government press the amendments to a vote—I suspect that they intend to do so—Conservative Members should be aware that the next Session may bring amending legislation to the Bill.

I shall turn briefly to the main thrust of the Government's proposals in the amendments. Conservative Members have expressed disquiet about the Government's earlier resistance to the amendments from Lord Peyton on British Rail's right to bid. If those hon. Members are willing to fall for the proposals, I fear that they are liable to fall for anything. It appears that Conservative Members wanted to secure a reasonable opportunity for BR to enter competitive bids to provide services. We have heard a good deal about the level playing field. The truth is that the Government are denying BR that level playing field and are saying effectively that it may compete only, if no private operator is interested in running the service.

By any standards BR is an efficient railway undertaking. There are Conservative Members who do not believe that. Why, I wonder, are those hon. Members so enthusiastic about the enlisting of the support of BR managers through the proposed MEBOs? In any comparative terms—capital investment, railway undertakings, the proportion of GDP expended upon railways—BR is an outstandingly efficient and productive railway system. Why should BR be effectively and extensively denied the right to compete for the franchises?

There is an inconsistency here with earlier Government legislation which provided for competitive tendering in local government and in the health service. The Government have always permitted the public sector to bid. After all, BR knows something about running a railway, unlike virtually every other potential franchisee in sight. Is it not true that the Government are fearful that BR would win most of the franchises? In the public sector and in local government, the public sector won three out of every four contracts and, I might add, Swedish railways have won most of their work.

8.15 pm

Is it not true that the Government are aware that there is virtually no interest in the franchises? Are not the Government seeking to exclude BR to make it easier for the pathetically few private bidders—however expensive and however inefficient they are likely to be—to enter the scene? It is beyond my comprehension that the Conservative Members who apparently were willing at an earlier stage to go out on a limb to secure a reasonable opportunity for BR to provide these services are to be bought off easily. I hope very much that those hon. Members will listen carefully to the strength of the arguments made by my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North and by other Opposition Members and that they will join us in the Lobby tonight.

Sir David Mitchell (Hampshire, North-West): In the original Bill, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State provided, I believe wisely, that British Rail could not bid for franchises, but that the franchise director need not accept a franchise bid and could leave BR as the operator. The Lords have amended that to permit BR to bid for franchises and my right hon. Friend has tabled an amendment which goes part of the way to meet the Lords amendment.

I regret the Lords amendment, which I believe was short-sighted and misdirected. If BR bids, the private

[Sir David Mitchell]

sector will be frightened off. There have been continual references during the debate to the need for a level playing field. I do not think that there is any way in which a level playing field can be achieved with BR as a bidder. I shall explain why I think that is the case.

BR has enormous financial clout and there will be fear by those who are invited to bid for franchises that BR will cross-subsidise. I regret to say that I disagree with my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone), and that is unusual. To bid for a franchise, any bidder needs to know the cost and overheads and how to apportion and predict the movement of those overheads. Does the House, my right hon. Friend or anyone who knows BR intimately believe that there is any way in which BR knows what its costs are and can predict them? It is not organised to do that.

I do not believe, nor does anyone who knows the industry, that BR would be capable of putting forward a clean bid on a level playing field. I know that, many hon. Members know that and—more important—anyone thinking of putting forward a MEBO knows that only too well. If BR is to bid, there will be cross-subsidisation, which I as a taxpayer have every right to be fearful of. BR would be using taxpayers' money and that would be cheap and nasty; cheap for BR and nasty for the taxpayer. That would inevitably frighten off bidders from the private sector.

There are important points which my hon. Friend the Minister should not overlook when he winds up the debate. The benefit of private sector culture will be lost if BR continues to hold a franchise. One can take a photograph of the situation at any particular moment, but the situation is moving. Looking forward over the period of the franchise, there will be opportunities for innovation and for change. It is that innovation and change at which BR is so bad and at which the private sector is inevitably better. The real difficulty is that, if BR is to be compared with a private sector bid, the facts will be concealed. BR will rumble on as it has for so many years, whereas the innovative private sector bidder could bring new ideas and new ways of capturing the market and of pleasing the customer.

Mr. Keith Hill: During the hon. Gentleman's earlier incarnation as a Transport Minister, he leaped around the counties of Hereford and Worcester in pursuit of buses to pave the way for bus deregulation.

I suppose that the hon. Member would argue that we have seen the benefits of innovative creativity from bus deregulation and privatisation, which has led to a total loss of 13 million bus passenger journeys each year since its introduction.

Sir David Mitchell: The hon. Gentleman will know that bus deregulation has been a considerable success in Worcester. In many parts of the country, innovative ideas have been introduced, such as the minibus, which virtually did not exist before the Transport Act 1985 was passed. If the hon. Gentleman wants to know what happened, one result of bus deregulation was the introduction of a whole series of new ways of providing services which were of substantial benefit to the consumer.

Yes, there is a long-term downward trend in the number of passenger miles. That is simply a result of growth of the use of the private car, with all the convenience that it can offer. That trend has not altered. I shall come back to the hon. Gentleman's point about buses in a moment; I do not want to detain the House for too long.

We must bear in mind the serious point that if British Rail can bid, the level playing field that Members on both sides of the House believe should exist will not be provided. Management buy-outs will be stifled. No manager will bid against his employer knowing that if he loses the franchise, he will continue to be beholden to that employer for his employment. Indeed, managers will think two or three times about whether they dare to put their future employment prospects on the line, mortgage their houses and do the other things that might go with a buy-out. There is serious anxiety about whether managers and employees will dare to bid against a British Rail franchise offer.

The last reason why there will not be a level playing field is that managers will have to put up their own money, mortgage their houses and take real risk while British Rail will bid with the bottomless purse of the taxpayer. The Government amendment says that nothing should prevent British Rail or its subsidiaries from being franchisees, subject to the right of the franchise director to forbid it, if desirable, for the purpose of promoting competition for franchises, encouraging management and employee buy-outs, encouraging new entrants to railway operations in the United Kingdom and preventing market dominance by one operator. I find it difficult to live with that. I am prepared to do so and to put confidence in my right hon. and hon. Friends this evening, but the original Bill was much more sound in ensuring that genuine innovative new bids were brought into the working of railways.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) feared that large increases in subsidy would be required when franchises came in. The hon. Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill) spoke about buses. There is one lesson to be learned from bus deregulation. I refer to it in the narrow aspect. When socially necessary bus services were put out to tender, service after service which previously needed a substantial subsidy needed much less and, in many cases, no subsidy. That was to the astonishment of the county and metropolitan councils which had been paying the subsidy thinking that they were obtaining value for money.

Mr. Bayley: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Sir David Mitchell: Certainly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. We cannot go into a long discussion about the pros and cons of buses.

Sir David Mitchell: In that case, I will not give way. I conclude by saying that some £40 million was saved by county and metropolitan councils throughout the country when they discovered to their astonishment that, by putting bus services out to competitive tender, they saved substantial amounts of subsidy. I believe that there will be considerable astonishment when it is found that the same thing applies to the railways.

I bow to your wisdom, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in not pursuing the argument about buses any further. I shall support my hon. Friend the Minister in the Lobby, but we would have done better to reject the Lords amendment and stuck to the original Bill.

Mr. Harvey: One would find it easier to believe that the Government had had a significant change of heart and were making a concession on this point if their change of heart was not so late in the day. As others have said, it came after the Government's defeat in the Lords. Their response has been cobbled together on the back of an envelope and as the hon. Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill) said, there is considerable doubt about its legal validity.

The argument about allowing British Rail to bid has been with us for a long time. When the White Paper was issued, long before the Bill was published, I asked from this Bench whether British Rail would be allowed to bid. The point was raised again on Second Reading, throughout the Committee proceedings, on Report and Third Reading and in the Lords, where the Government were defeated. Only after that defeat, when the Government faced the prospect of the same thing happening in the House of Commons, did the Secretary of State wave his magic wand and come up with the strange formula that we have before us.

We were told earlier that the leaked document from the Department of Transport which said that the privatisation process would double the level of public expenditure was just a model. But surely the model of allowing BR to bid with some handicap was considered earlier. If it was ruled out as invalid then, why has the option been whipped out at this late stage as the basis of the legislation which is shortly to go on to the statute book?

Allowing BR to bid is simply a device to allow Conservative Members who have threatened to rebel to walk away without loss of face. It has nothing to do with the running of the railway service or choice for passengers. Nor does it do anything to guarantee the position of the taxpayer, who has poured money into the nation's rail network for decade upon decade. The prospect of allowing British Rail to bid was the only guarantee that the service would not be taken away and dismembered by spivs who would come in briefly to run a railway service, find that they could not, bale out and leave the mess behind them.

The suggestion that risk is being transferred from the public to the private sector and that some value should be put on that gives the game away. I wonder whether it is true. If the risk that will be taken by the private sector will not be bailed out by the taxpayer when the crunch comes, the fears that have been voiced by Members of Parliament and people elsewhere that services will close will be realised. If there is a risk transfer, who will pick up that risk?

At this point we should be discussing the Government's rail policy for the future. A proper policy would seek to avoid the doubling of road use by 2025. A sensible policy might reasonably seek to double use of the railways by the end of the decade. People want to use the railways more. They are put off by the ridiculously high fares that they have to pay. The Bill will make that worse. We shall see a net transfer of not only freight but passenger traffic away from rail back on to the roads.

Ministers are fond of saying that, if the amount of freight carried on the rail doubled, it would reduce road traffic by only 5 per cent. That is false, because it ignores the distance of the journeys involved. If the railway doubled its share of the 200 km-plus market, it would reduce long-distance lorry freight by 50 per cent. That would be a popular move. It would be a great deal more popular than building a motorway from Felixstowe to south Wales and the south-west—a proposal that is coming on to the agenda.

The Bill is not about safeguarding the taxpayer or improving choice for the passenger. It is not about facing up to the real crisis of under-investment in the railways or exploring new ways of doing something about it. The game has been given away during the debate. We have heard that the Bill is about cutting public subsidy. I believe that it is about continuing to pursue the Thatcherite dogma of the 1980s and convincing the right of the party that the candle burns on, the policy still exists and the Government are true to the faith.

The Government amendment is ridiculous. It says that BR can bid, but that in any circumstance that any sane man can think of, the bid is to be disregarded. There are four reasons why it can be disregarded. One is to feather-bed management buy-outs, which will be the only real prospective bidders. The second is to feather-bed private sector buyers. There is no sign of any of them. The third is competition, although by the time competition has been skewed twice, one has to query whether it is worthy of the name competition.

The fourth reason why the bid can be disregarded is to prevent anyone from having a dominant position in the market. British Rail has 100 per cent. of market at the moment. That means that, at any given point, on any franchise that is considered, British Rail can be disregarded because it is a dominant supplier. The catch-all enables the franchising director to disregard BR's bid on any occasion for any reason that enters his mind. We need British Rail to be a strong, vibrant bidder, an on-going committed public transport provider that is going to guarantee quality to the public and to guarantee value for money to the taxpayer. We do not want BR to be an impotent bidder of last resort.

8.30 pm

The consequences of the amendment are no different to those that would have occurred before the amendment was tabled. The Government were initially saying that, if the private sector management buy-outs did not produce a worthwhile bid, BR would be left as the operator as the last resort. What sort of service is it to operate as the provider of the last resort? What sort of service will the passenger get on lines run by the operator of the last resort?

Under those circumstances, BR should be given the franchise. BR should be given a guarantee that, for a period of seven, 10, or 15 years, it will be running that service and it should have the same incentives and objectives as any other bidder or anybody else operating any part of the rail network. Damage has already been caused to morale and unity among BR employees by the work that has gone on in putting together the shadow franchises.

I wonder why, even at this late stage, the Government did not take the opportunity to save themselves from the ridiculous ideology of trying to prevent BR from bidding. Even the *Evening Standard*—hardly a renowned bastion of left-wing thinking—asked in an editorial in the summer, what on earth all this is for? Who is going to benefit? Will it end up with fares going up, services being reduced and a new level of bureaucracy being created just to split BR into franchises? It said that the game is not worth the

candle. The late Robert Adley summed up the Bill as the poll tax on wheels. That description and what he meant by it it will come home to roost.

I deplore the Bill for the passengers and I deplore it for the taxpayers. The only thing that prevents the Conservatives from plunging on to their own sword is the hope that the franchising director will save them from themselves and allow BR to bid.

Mr. Peter Luff (Worcester): Opposition tactics over the Bill, especially in the past two days, have consisted of little more than delay, scaremongering and, most appallingly, threats. When the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) described yesterday what would happen, in the unfortunate event of a future Labour Government seeking to renationalise the railway, to those managers who dared to try to provide a better service to the customer, we saw the Opposition's real enthusiasm for involving management and employees in running a better business. I was deeply disappointed with what he said.

The words of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East were not surprising. We know that the Opposition want to kill the Bill. They are not, and never have been, interested in the consumer. Their interest is in the producer, the provider of services. I was disappointed to hear the hon. Member for North Devon (Mr. Harvey) sharing that same prejudice. I shall tell the House what the Bill is about. It is about providing new ideas, new investment and new involvement in the railway from the management and employees of the railway. That is why I was so anxious to speak on this group of amendments.

I expect significant private sector interest in the franchises to be offered by the franchising director. I think that that interest will often be expressed in partnership with management and employee teams, and very often I expect management and employee teams to take the lead in bidding for the franchises in their own right—and I welcome that. We must ensure that no potential new participants are frightened from bidding for the franchises by anything in the Bill.

I sincerely hope that the concessions that have been made by the Government in this group of amendments in an attempt to get the Bill on the statute book before the end of the Session will not have that frightening effect. I fear that there is already some evidence that managers are becoming less enthusiastic as a result of their concern at this concession. I shall ask my hon. Friend the Minister to assure me on a number of specific points.

The British Railways Board fought a clever campaign to try to frustrate the Bill. One senior BR representative said recently:

"The board will not stand by and preside over its own suicide"

Frankly, that is no concern of the House. Our concern must be for the quality of service, not the preservation of the British Railways Board. It is essential that we look carefully at the Government's new amendments to see whether they go too far, whether they will frustrate management and employee buy-outs and whether they will betray the confidence of those managers who are currently preparing bids and who believe that they can run a better railway. Contrary to the view of the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson), there are many more than three managers currently preparing bids who were named in *The Daily Telegraph* yesterday.

Over recent months, I have spoken to a number of managers who are interested in preparing bids and they have warned of the consequences of accepting the amendment as it stands. The concerns that I shall express are not mine, but those of railway managers who want to bid. First——

Mr. Nick Raynsford (Greenwich): Out of self-interest.

Mr. Luff: Their interest is not self-interest, not exclusively self-interest. Yes, they will make some money, but they will provide a better service to the passenger. That is the important point. The British Railways Board has access to money at different rates from managers or outsiders bidding for franchises. There is a real danger of unequal competition as a result of that consideration.

Secondly, the board would always have been the operator of the last resort if the franchising director declined to accept any other bid. I still worry whether that process needs even the limited double chance that it is being given by the amendments.

Thirdly, in many areas, many managers feel that the board has failed to reduce central administration adequately under the Organising for Quality initiative, landing individual managers with excessive central costs. Managers must be allowed a chance to show what they can do when they choose how much central administration to buy.

Fourthly, many outside bids could be non-compliant. They may seek greater vertical integration than the Government seem prepared to accept. A large central compliant bid from the British Railways Board would automatically rule out outside bids, thus inhibiting the evolution and development of the railway. I hope that, under the Government's new proposals for the objectives of the franchising director, that danger will be carefully monitored.

Fifthly, managers of British Rail know that they have an unsaleable brand, with 45 years of adverse associations. During that period, the railways share of the passenger transport market has declined slowly, but consistently. Under the new regime, the managers to whom I have spoken are looking for a new start for new products that can succeed. I hope that the Minister will assure me that there is nothing to stop bidders grouping together to sustain the one British Railways brand that has real value in the marketplace: the InterCity brand.

Sixthly, the Government will continue to provide the British Railways Board with money through public service obligation grants to run those parts of the railway with which it is entrusted. If the BRB is allowed to bid for franchises, there is a real danger that it will direct funds to franchise bids. That could worsen the service elsewhere on the passenger railway.

Seventhly—a point that has been made by many hon. Members and commentators—there will be a conflict of interest if managers are forced to choose between whether to work on a British Rail bid or on their own. I must welcome what the Government have done to clear the way for those bids.

It is now too late to fine-tune the plans. I hope that the amendments meet the seven specific concerns of the managers that I have expressed. I will be carefully scrutinising the activities of the franchising director to ensure that he uses his powers well to address those seven concerns. How well he does so will determine the success of the Bill, which provides an opportunity for the liberating winds of choice, competition and concentration on the

customer—something so often lacking in so many parts of the British Railways Board's activities over the years—to blow through the railway. I wish the franchising director well in that onerous task.

Mr John Gunnell (Morley and Leeds, South): I was watching television on Sunday afternoon and saw the Secretary of State receive the news about the extra £2 billion expenditure. I have heard him say tonight that it was only the 79th paper from the working group and therefore that he is discounting figures that gave him such a shock on that programme. Will the Minister tell us whether there are to be increased costs?

Sir David Mitchell: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that, in the past, British Rail has had to show an 8 per cent. return on new investment? The paper to which he referrred dealt with the consequence of the wholly new concept of having to apply an 8 per cent. return to all the old investment. That is not likely to become a practical reality, and if somebody has worked it out as one of the options in the Department, the hon. Gentleman should not put too much weight on it.

Mr. Gunnell: I am not about to put any weight on it. The Minister for Public Transport, in his discussions with passenger transport authorities, has agreed that, next year, their public service obligation grant—the money that they get through the section 20 agreement—will need to be increased by 50 per cent. to cover the extra costs of the changes that will be taking place. Therefore, he has accepted that the extra money is a result of the Bill. Sadly, because of the guillotine, we shall not be able to debate the necessary arrangements to reschedule the section 20 grants.

It will come as no surprise to the Minister or to any hon. Member to hear that PTAs wish BR to bid for every franchise in which they have an interest. They fear that, if BR becomes only a residual operator, management motivation will be lost and efficiency will drop. Over a number of years, PTAs and their executives have exerted considerable pressure on BR to improve financial and operational performance. When I was leader of a metropolitan authority, I had a number of such meetings, in which we demanded increased efficiency from British Rail. The Government have acknowledged the success of PTAs and written into the Bill provisions to continue, and perhaps strengthen, the role of PTAs and their executives.

By keeping the maximum pressure on British Rail to maintain efficient management practices and seek innovative solutions, the PTAs will be able to continue to improve local services. If they cannot continue to do so, they fear a return to escalating costs and declining standards. If there is a mixture of organisations, with a residual operation by British Rail—if that is what it becomes—it will have no long-term goals except its own extinction.

I accept that there may be bidders for franchises from management buy-outs. Another possibility is bus companies, and some major bus companies have been looking seriously at bidding, but have already decided that, as the franchises are too large for them, they will not bid. No one has yet mentioned possible bids from foreign railway operators. Will the Government be prepared to sanction bidding from such companies, which may then charge a higher price than BR to run the service? There might also be bids from non-transport companies—we do not know of any yet—that might seek partnerships with BR teams of managers. All those possibilities do not look likely to become realities.

We have to ask the Government to consider several questions. First, why will there be no genuine competitive tendering in this privatisation? My hon. Friend the Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill) said that the Government have permitted other in-house groups within the public sector to set up and compete against the private sector. I would go further: I would say that the Government have encouraged that. We have seen many examples of groups that have offered services first within the public sector and then, as a result of their experience there, have put in bids and transferred to the private sector.

The Government would have benefited if they had allowed British Rail to compete. The hon. Member for Hampshire, North-West (Sir D. Mitchell) said that he did not think that BR managers were all that good at some of the aspects of business that are necessary in a management buy-out. He said that they were not good at giving the sort of financial information that would be necessary in a bid. In that case, it would be better to allow BR to develop such expertise than simply to cut its managers free now.

We have to ask about the transfer of risk, a point that I mentioned last night. The Minister said that he did not regard the whole of the private sector bid as being covered by the transfer of risk. If BR is providing a service at £10 million a year and a private sector bidder offers to provide the service at £15 million a year, will the transfer of risk be more than the £5 million a year to make that private sector bid more economical?

8.45 pm

We have to be suspicious of the Government's amendment, because it contains no referrence to costs, as the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) said. Given that the amendments are designed to transfer services to the private sector, why is there no clause to ensure that the transfer does not incur significant additional costs? Why is that not a limiting factor and why have the Government not put economy at the forefront of their amendments? In every other respect, it has been clear that the franchising director has to take maximum account of cost and the economy; but not in this instance. That is why the Minister, in dealing with PTAs—he has been willing to talk to them throughout the passage of the Bill—has said that the section 20 grants will have to rise by 50 per cent. to cover the increased costs of services. Those increased costs are brought about by the change in the Bill. The Minister cannot avoid answering that point.

Mr. Gary Waller (Keighley): Any lingering doubts that I might have had about the Government's amendments would have been blown away by the lack of vision shown by Opposition Members. Time and again, they have ignored the key point, which was emphasised by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, that even where BR does not have an opportunity to make a formal bid, the franchise director will be precluded from awarding a franchise to an operator whose potential does not match the track record of BR.

The draft objectives for the franchising director state clearly, on the first page, that he must seek to protect the interests of passengers. It would be nonsense in those terms to award a franchise to an operator whose potential service would be worse. We have heard the misleading claim that

[Mr. Gary Waller]

BR is a provider of last resort. The suggestion is that BR will be left with services only if no other bids are submitted for them. That is a misunderstanding of the purposes of the Bill. Sadly, that misunderstanding is spread throughout the country. We have to explain the measure better. Unreal fears have been promoted in recent months on the basis of misleading information deliberately provided from certain sources.

It seems to me that rail users have a good two-way bet. The BR shadow franchises will inevitably have to respond to commercial pressures and, whether BR or a management and employee buy-out eventually runs the service, it will be a better service—at least it will be no worse—because the franchise director will not award a franchise to someone who will provide a worse service.

Another myth is that BR will be left running a rump railway after a bout of cherry picking. Anyone who believes that clearly has not read the Bill or the "Draft objectives for the franchising director", the first page of which includes as a principal objective

"through payment of support to the British Railways Board and its wholly owned subsidiaries and to franchisees, to secure an improved overall service for passengers."

I am convinced that, for a long time, services will continue to require taxpayers' support. That cannot be denied. Indeed, it is bound to be the case, as it is in all countries with railway services.

I hope that the franchising process will bring the greatest improvement to those services that need it. For various reasons, the service currently provided by BR is patchy throughout the country. We all know that certain lines desperately need improvement and the franchising process is the best way to ensure that it is directed to those services.

I welcome the fact that the Government have gone not for a big bang but a gradualist approach. As time goes by, the Bill's benefits will become clearer and clearer.

Ms Glenda Jackson: Yesterday, my hon. Friend the Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Mrs. Dunwoody) referred to another amendment in the Bill as "Alice in Wonderland". Surely this amendment brings us to the Mad Hatter's tea party. I clearly recall my hon. Friend the Member for Wrexham (Dr. Marek) tabling an amendment in Committee urging the Government to allow BR to bid for franchises. The Government's response then was a categorical no. For a variety of reasons, BR was not to be allowed to bid for franchises in the bright new world of privatised railways.

What has happened in such a comparatively short time to change the Government's attitude to the idea of British Rail bidding for franchises? Could it conceivably be that the private sector has shown no interest whatever in taking on the British Rail network? That is probably a stronger reason than the much-vaunted Conservative Back-Bench revolt. Even someone as comparatively new to the House as I am knows that Conservative Back Benchers tend to talk a good fight, but inevitably fail to deliver the knock-out punch.

The argument of the hon. Member for Hampshire, North-West (Sir D. Mitchell), that BR should not be allowed to bid because it was over-qualified, was absurd. I should not like to travel on a rail network run by amateurs, which is, in essence, what we are talking about. He argued that it is unfair because BR has a bottomless pit of public money with which to provide an improved service. We have seen in the past few weeks that that is patently untrue. The Government have savagely reduced public service obligation and BR subsidies.

I asked the Secretary of State this afternoon whether the subsidy earmarked for private operators when they bid for franchises would be given to the BR service if a private franchiser failed to win a franchise. BR will be expected, come hell or high water, to keep the trains running on our national network. As usual, the Secretary of State neglected to answer.

How can the Government seriously expect to improve the use of the rail network, attracting more passengers on to it and keeping freight off the roads? As one of my hon. Friends said yesterday, when will the Government give up their love affair with the juggernaut?

How can the proposed basis for introducing this ridiculous Bill be achieved if those now running the rail network, who will be expected to get out of trouble privatised franchise operators who significantly fail to deliver the service? How are we to expand the use of our networks and attract more people onto them when the Government consistently say that BR is a fail-safe device, is not good enough to bid for new franchises, and lacks the imagination to produce better services?

I spent an entire day with the management and work force of the part of BR that runs through my constituency —the north London line. A more dedicated group of people it would be extremely hard to find. They have weathered and worn the Government's chopping and changing and their inability to define what they mean by a public network service, short or long-term franchises, or plans for British Rail. Yet the members of that management and work force are still dedicated to the idea of a public network system. They are desperate to improve their stations and only too anxious to improve their services. They have a welter of imaginative ideas which they and I believe would attract more people back to that stretch of the railway. They have wonderful ideas for integrating that piece of railway into the much wider network.

Those who significantly failed to link this country by means of the channel tunnel link should listen to those members of the BR management. But they are not interested in the idea of breaking up the existing network in which public money will do little more than line the pockets of private investors who, as we have heard time and again in the House, lack any experience in running a rail network.

Only one group of people knows how to run a network. It could run it infinitely better if only the Government would acknowledge that a railway is a national resource and infrastructure that should be funded by public and private combinations, not split up in this absurd way.

Mr. Wilson: May I ask the Minister a specific point on ghost bids? I understand that there has been a change in Government thinking and that track and rolling stock costs will not now be distributed by the franchise director to specific franchises but, instead, the franchise director will pay a lump sum to Railtrack and the leasing companies.

Will the Minister confirm whether that is correct? If so, it represents a fundamental change in the Bill, virtually abolishing the concept of transparency and the attribution of costs to particular routes within the franchise. It also

makes it impossible to make meaningful comparisons between BR's current performance and the bids being made. Has that major change in Government thinking, as yet unannounced, taken place?

We have had a full debate for the past two hours. I am pleased to see that, until the closing speeches, the allocation of speeches has gone back and forth across the Chamber.

Despite that widespread participation, the Government have truncated the debate on the spurious ground that there was procrastination in yesterday's debate. The debate would have been even better if it could have continued last night and we had been allowed more time. The Government's assertion that Opposition Members were speaking to no purpose has been discredited in the past couple of hours.

The Government's arguments on the amendments have been similarly discredited. Conservative arguments were summed up by my hon. Friend the Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Ms Jackson), who said that they asserted that British Rail was to be disqualified from bidding because it over-qualified. People who use the railways want a safe and efficient system that will cost the taxpayer as little as possible. They would prefer over-qualified people to those who are under-qualified, who are brought into the network not to improve it but to practise the dogma and prejudice that underlies the legislation.

As the hon. Member for North Devon (Mr. Harvey) said, the grounds on which the franchising director, who will be a creature of Government, will be able to rule out British Rail are part of a catch-all clause. BR will be left as a last resort provider. We shall oppose that at every stage, and shall draw attention to what is being done, to the discrimination against British Rail and to the disadvantage that will be imposed on the taxpayer. We shall continue to oppose the amendments.

9 pm

Mr. Freeman: I shall try to be as succinct as possible, but I am sure that the House would want me to answer all points properly. I can tell the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) that, for the first round of franchises, we expect that the franchising director will reach agreement with Rail track on the costs of track access for all franchises.

After that, the franchising director will ask for bids for subsidy for those lines that he proposes to franchise. Therefore, the bids will reflect not only the cost of train operation but the cost of access to the track. Of course, open access operators and the freight industry will bid directly to Railtrack. As I have said, we expect Railtrack as from yesterday to negotiate terms for access to the track. Rolling stock is a matter for the rolling stock companies.

The hon. Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill) asked about the treaty of Rome. Obviously, the franchising director must exercise his discretion under the amendment in line with our obligations under that treaty. The amendment does not require the franchising director to take any action in breach of those obligations.

The hon. Members for North Devon (Mr. Harvey) and for Morley and Leeds, South (Mr. Gunnell) spoke about the £2 billion. My right hon. Friend and I have explained that, but I shall try to do so again. This is a model. It does not imply any additional funds for the railway system—that is to say, Railtrack, British Rail and the franchising director. It is simply one attempt of many to estimate the external financing limit of one part of the railway system, the franchising director. That is all in the public sector. I am sure that my right hon. Friend will look at many more possible solutions as to how a given sum of public money can be split between the external financing limits of those three public sector bodies.

It is not true that I have spoken about 50 per cent. The figure represents the increase in track costs to the passenger transport authorities, and I have no idea what the final increase will be. We shall provide a specific grant to the PTAs to cover the increase in costs in 1994-95. We have no desire to interfere with the level of service, and there is no reason to do so.

The Secretary of State and I are grateful to my hon. Friends the Members for Hampshire, North-West (Sir D. Mitchell) and for Worcester (Mr. Luff). I appreciate their support. They also want to improve the private sector's contribution to the railway, and that can be done by permitting additional investment and greater innovation. That is not a criticism of BR managers or employees. Because of the nature of a public sector monopoly, those two benefits are not properly reaped. The issue is how that is to be done.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North asked whether British Rail would bid. I confirm that our expectation, intention and belief is that it will bid competitively in certain circumstances. That is the purpose of my right hon. Friend's amendments. However, it will not be invited to bid in specific cases. The franchising director will decide. That is where the issue of promoting an interest in buy-outs by management-employees arises. That will encourage competition and prevent dominance. I shall try to define precisely the last of those.

There is evidence that British Rail management are seeking to prepare bids. We welcome that. I have visited many BR managers and I know that they are interested in the 25 franchises in the offing. Some of that interest will manifest itself next year and some in years to come.

The hon. Member for Morley and Leeds, South asked about value for money. The franchising director's budget is cash-limited, and he must use the money efficiently and economically. Therefore, when he compares private sector bids with BR's historic costs and makes his decision, taking account of risk transfer to accept a higher subsidy bid in the early years, he must initially justify that decision to the Public Accounts Committee. Of course, his judgments are subject to judicial review. The figures cited by the hon. Gentleman are way over the top. There may well be some differences, but they will have to be justified.

My hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) asked seven questions, and I shall seek to answer them as succinctly as I can. I am sorry that my hon. Friend the Member for Ashford (Sir K. Speed) is not here. Some of the questions that my hon. Friend the Member for Keighley (Mr. Waller) asked overlapped with the seven from my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes, and I hope that I have them correctly.

First, we did not manage to table the amendments to deal with the ability of the railway museum to acquire artefacts from the private sector. I will reply to the director of the railway museum. I give an assurance that I will have a meeting with him. It may be that we will be able to achieve the same objectives, but not via the statute. *[Laughter.]* There seems to be some mirth about that. It is

[Mr. Freeman]

not an evasion at all; we intend that the museum should obtain artefacts from both the private and public sector. I do not understand what the mirth is about.

Secondly, my hon. Friend asked whether the franchising director would operate on a level playing field. It is important that the franchising director obtains value for money. As I have already explained to the House, his judgments will have to be explained in due course to the Public Accounts Committee. There is certainly no requirement upon him to exercise that discretion in any particular fashion. He will enable BR to bid in certain cases, and he must explain any actions he takes in relation to the private sector.

Thirdly, my hon. Friend asked what was meant by dominance. It does not mean an absolute bar on BR bids from the beginning. My right hon. Friend and I certainly do not interpret dominance to mean that no BR bid should be allowed until it is down to 25 per cent. of all rail services in Great Britain: that is clearly absurd. Judgment will have to be used regionally and nationally, because we want to encourage private sector participation.

Fourthly, my hon. Friend asked about the publication of decisions. My hon. Friend will know that clause 67 of the print of the Bill dated 27 May states that the franchising director must publish and annual report which must be laid before the House by my right hon. Friend. We believe that is the right way to explain the decisions that have been taken.

Mr. Rathbone: It is absolutely essential that those decisions are explained in the annual report. In order to enable a judicial challenge to be made, it is unreasonable to expect a potential challenger to postpone making that challenge until the annual report becomes available, so it is important that the franchising director publishes his reasons before the annual report.

Mr. Freeman: I understand that. I am sure that the franchising director will be making announcements. I will reflect on what my hon. Friend has said, but I can give him no assurance at this stage that the franchising director will go beyond giving a account of this activities in the annual report. I understand what my hon. Friend is arguing; perhaps it is sensible to review what statement is made by the franchising director as and when he makes each decision. It is a perfectly reasonable point, and my right hon. Friend and I will reflect on it.

I was asked what was a reasonable period for BR to operate as a matter of last resort and continue to run services if it does not participate in the franchise award. We have deliberately not tried to define that, because it is not possible to do so. My right hon. Friend and I will reconsider the draft objectives which have been tabled for consideration by the House and reflect on how the language can be improved, but I do not hold out any hope that that period should specifically match the franchise period that the franchise director had in mind to offer if BR was not bidding.

I entirely accept my hon. Friend's point that we must ensure that the morale of BR does not deteriorate, and that management should be given some certainty in continuing to run services.

Sixthly, my hon. Friend asked whether there were other means by which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State can direct the franchising director in terms of accepting or rejecting British Rail as a bidder.

The answer is no, my right hon. Friend cannot use clause 5 to instruct the franchising director to use his powers to exclude BR from the bidding.

Finally, my hon. Friend asked me about vertical integration. That is not part of the Government's policy, which is why the franchising director has to refer these matters to my right hon. Friend. I am sure that that must be right, and we have set out our reasons for that.

I very much welcome the speeches by my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes and other hon. Friends. I hope that the assurances that I have given on these important issues will make them feel able to vote with the Government. I commend to the House both the motion moved by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to disagree with the Lords amendment No. 31 and the Government amendments in lieu.

Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment:—

The House divided: Ayes 316, Noes 282.

Division No. 381] **[9.10 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'lre)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman

Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Baldry, Tony
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria

Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Sheffld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Eric Illsley and
Mr. J. O. Jones.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Amendment in lieu of the Lords amendment proposed:

(a) in page 24, line 40, at end insert—

'(3) Subject to the following provisions of this section, subsection (1) above shall not prevent—

(a) the British Railways Board (in this Act referred to as "the Board"), or

(b) a wholly owned subsidiary of the Board,

from being a franchisee.

(4) Subject to the following provisions of this section, whenever the Franchising Director proposes to issue invitations to tender under section 23 below in respect of any particular services for the carriage of passengers by railway, he may, after consultation with the Board and the Regulator, determine that neither the Board nor any wholly owned subsidiary of the Board shall be eligible for inclusion among the persons to whom the invitations are to be issued or who may be selected as the franchisee.

(5) The Franchising Director shall not make a determination under subsection (4) above unless he considers that it is desirable to do so—

(a) for the purpose of promoting competition for franchises;

(b) for the purpose of promoting the award of franchise agreements to companies in which qualifying railway employees have a substantial interest;

(c) for the purpose of encouraging new entry to the passenger railway industry; or

(d) for the purpose of preventing or reducing the dominance of any person or persons in the market for the provision in Great Britain, or in a part of Great Britain, of services for the carriage of passengers by railway.

(6) The Franchising Director shall—

(a) give notice of any determination under subsection (4) above to the Board; and

(b) publish notice of the determination in such manner as he thinks fit.

(7) Nothing in subsection (5) above shall be taken to affect the matters which the Franchising Director may take into account in determining the other persons whom he invites to tender for franchise agreements or whom he selects as franchisees.

(8) No objectives, instructions or guidance shall be given under section 5 above by the Secretary of State to the Franchising Director with respect to the exercise of his functions under this section.

(9) In this section—

"competition for franchises" means competition to become franchisees under franchise agreements;

"encouraging new entry to the passenger railway industry" means encouraging private sector operators who do not currently provide services for the carriage of passengers by railway to commence doing so;

"qualifying railway employees", in the case of any franchise agreement, means persons who are or have been employed in an undertaking which provides or provided the services to which the franchise agreement

relates at a time before those services begin to be provided under that franchise agreement.'.—*[Mr. MacGregor.]*

Question put, That the amendment be made:—

The House divided: Ayes 313, Noes 283.

Division No. 382] **[9.27 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thumham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen

Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Timothy Kirkhope.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Jon Owen Jones and
Mr. Eric Illsley.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Mr. Anthony Steen (South Hams): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. About 10 days ago, my hon. Friend the Member for Weston-super-Mare (Sir J. Wiggin) raised

the question why the police were no longer providing assistance to hon. Members who wished to get to a Division. Such assistance requires the police to be in Parliament square when a Division is called.

I raised this issue a few hours ago, but since then I have learnt that my hon. Friend raised it 10 days ago, but no action has been taken. I had difficulty getting to the House for the Division. Apparently, the new superintendent of police has decided that all police based in Parliament square should be removed when a Division is called and should not help hon. Members to get to the House to vote. That is in breach of our Sessional Orders——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman, but he will realise that the debate is guillotined. I assure him that I will report the matter to Madam Speaker and ensure that it is looked at tomorrow morning.

Mr. Steen: Further to that point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The crux of the issue is clear to me. It is an important issue, and I can give the hon. Gentleman full confidence that it will be looked at in detail tomorrow morning.

Amendments made: (b), in page 54, line 36, after '20' insert '21, 23'.

(c), in page 72, line 2, at end insert—

'( ) every notice of a determination under section 22(4) above;'.—*[Mr. Freeman.]*

Lords Amendment No. 32 agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 33, after clause 24, to insert the following new clause—*Fares and approved discount fare scheme—*

" .—(1) A franchise agreement may include provision with respect to the fares to be charged for travel by means of the franchised services.

(2) Subject to the other provisions of this Act, if it appears to the Franchising Director that the interests of persons who use, or who are likely to use, franchised services so require, he shall ensure that the franchise agreement in question contains any such provision as he may consider necessary for the purpose of securing that any fares, or any fares of a class or description, which are to be charged are, in his opinion, reasonable in all the circumstances of the case.

(3) Every franchise agreement shall include provision requiring the franchise operator—

(a) to participate in every approved discount fare scheme,

(b) to charge fares, in cases to which such a scheme applies, at rates which are not in excess of the levels or, as the case may be, the maximum levels set by the scheme, and

(c) otherwise to comply with the requirements of every such scheme,

if and to the extent that the franchised services are services, or services of a class or description, in relation to which the approved discount fare scheme in question applies.

(4) The discount fare schemes which are to be regarded for the purposes of this section as "approved" are those which are from time to time approved for the purposes of this section by the Franchising Director.

(5) In this section—

"discount fare scheme" means any scheme for enabling persons who are young, elderly or disabled to travel by railway at discounted fares, subject to compliance with such conditions (if any) as may be imposed by or under the scheme;

"discounted fare" means a lower fare than the standard fare for the journey in question;

"scheme" includes any agreement or arrangements."

Mr. Freeman: I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: With this we shall discuss the following amendments to the Lords amendment: (a), in line 13, at end insert

'and every appropriate travelcard scheme'.

(b), in line 20, after 'scheme', insert 'Or travelcard scheme'.

(c), in line 21, after 'fare', insert 'and travelcard'.

(d), in line 32, at end insert

'"travelcard scheme" means any scheme for enabling persons to travel by railway, or by railway and other specified forms of transport in a described geographical area, during a described period of time, subject to compliance with such conditions (if any) as may be imposed by or under the scheme.'.

and Lords amendment No. 37.

Mr. Freeman: Amendments Nos. 33 and 37 are important, and I shall be as clear and succinct as I can be in introducing them. They deal with the commitment on fares control that we gave on Report. That has resulted in the amendment, which gives the franchising director the power to ensure that franchise agreements contain provisions to ensure that all fares are reasonable. The Government believe that the amendment fulfils the criteria that we set out during the debate.

[Mr. Freeman]

The amendment also covers discount schemes for the young, the elderly and the disabled, and their protection under the franchise agreements.

The franchising director will have powers to safeguard travelcard schemes. My right hon. Friend has given a specific commitment in regard to London; there are powers in relation to travelcard schemes outside London, but London is what is covered so far. We believe that broadly similar provisions could apply outside, but we have made no decision about that.

I hope that the House will agree that the amendments fulfil commitments, and are to be commended.

9.45 pm

Sir John Stanley (Tonbridge and Malling): I should like to speak briefly to Lords amendment No. 33, with particular reference to subsection (2).

This is a significant amendment, which was not printed in the Bill at any time during its previous consideration by the House of Commons. As my right hon. Friend the Minister has said, it introduces for the first time a provision enabling the franchising director to ensure, in the interests of the travelling public, that fares in the franchised services remain reasonable.

It is also worth referring to the genealogy of the amendment. We have heard a great deal from Opposition Members about the alleged potential implications of the proposals for fares; but the existence of this significant provision in the Bill owes nothing to the Opposition Front Bench—or, as it happens, to the Liberal Democrats. It was tabled on Report, as amendment No. 237, by my hon. Friends the Members for Ashford (Sir K. Speed), for Taunton (Mr. Nicholson), for Harrow, East (Mr. Dykes), for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone), for Ravensbourne (Sir J. Hunt), for Brighton, Kemptown (Mr. Bowden) and for Macclesfield (Mr. Winterton), and myself. On the following day, it was accepted in principle by my right hon. Friend.

I consider the amendment significant and substantive. I highlight just two features which illustrate that. First, there is the use of the phrase "shall ensure" in relation to the franchising director. The fact that that phrase is used—rather than the phrase "may ensure"—represents an important statutory obligation. The second important feature flows from that wording. By virtue of being statutory, the obligation is clearly justiciable—which means that, ultimately, any of the new consultative committees, any transport users association and, indeed, any individual member of the travelling public will have an opportunity to take legal action against the franchising director if he fails to discharge his obligation in relation to the reasonableness of fares.

I am delighted that this important amendment has been tabled, and I hope that the House will give it warm support.

Lords amendment agreed to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I understand that it may be the wish of the House to deal formally with Lords amendments Nos. 34 to 252, and to proceed to a debate on Lords amendment No. 253. If that is so, before I call the Minister to move formally to agree with the Lords amendments Nos. 34 to 252, I must draw the House's attention to the fact that privilege is involved in the Lords amendments Nos. 36, 40, 45, 56, 65, 83, 97 and 104.

Lords amendments Nos. 34 to 252 agreed to.
—[Some with Special Entry.]

Clause 86

EMPLOYMENT

Lords amendment: No. 253, leave out Clause 86 and insert the following new Clause—

Assignment of employees to particular parts of undertakings.

(" .—(1) Schemes may be made—

(a) assigning such qualifying employees, or qualifying employees of such a class or description, as may be specified in the scheme to such part of their employer's undertaking as may be so specified;

(b) modifying the terms and conditions of employment of those employees; and

(c) providing for the payment of compensation to any of those employees by his employer in respect of any overall detriment incurred by the employee in consequence of any modifications made by the scheme to his terms and conditions of employment.

(2) A scheme shall be made only for the purpose of facilitating, or otherwise in contemplation of, or in connection with,—

(a) the disposal of the undertaking, or part of the undertaking, of the Board or of a wholly owned subsidiary of the Board;

(b) the transfer, by virtue of a transfer scheme, of any property, rights or liabilities—

(i) from the Board or a wholly owned subsidiary of the Board to any such subsidiary or to a publicly owned railway company or a company wholly owned by the Franchising Director; or

(ii) from a company wholly owned by the Franchising Director to another such company;

(c) the provision of railway passenger services, or the operation of additional railway assets, under a franchise agreement, in circumstances where a previous franchise agreement relating to the provision of those services or the operation of those assets comes, or has come, to an end;

(d) the performance of any duty imposed on the Franchising Director by any provision of Part I above to secure—

(i) the provision of any railway passenger services;

(ii) the operation of any network or part of a network;

(iii) the operation of any station or light maintenance depot, or any part of a station or light maintenance depot; or

(e) the exercise of the power conferred on the Franchising Director by section 26 above to secure the operation of any additional railway assets.

(3) The power to make a scheme shall be exercisable—

(a) by the Board, in respect of employees of the Board or of any wholly owned subsidiary of the Board; or

(b) by the Franchising Director, in respect of employees of any company which is wholly owned by the Franchising Director.

(4) Where a scheme modifies the terms and conditions of employment of any person, the person's terms and conditions of employment after the modification takes effect must overall, and taking account of the amount or value of any compensation payable to him by virtue of subsection (1)(c) above in respect of any such detriment as is there mentioned, be no less favourable to him than his terms and conditions of employment before the modification takes effect.

(5) The duty imposed on an employer by section 4 of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 (requirement for written statement in respect of certain changes relating to an employee's employment) shall extend to all of the modifications made by a scheme to a qualifying employee's terms and conditions of employment, as if those modifications were changes required to be dealt with in a written statement under that section.

(6) If any qualifying employee whose terms and conditions of employment are modified by a scheme is aggrieved—

(a) at the provisions made by the scheme with respect to the payment of compensation, so far as applicable in his case, or

(b) at the fact that the scheme does not make any such provision,

he may make a written complaint to the maker of the scheme not later than twelve weeks after the date of issue of the written statement required by section 4 of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 in consequence of the modifications made by the scheme in the qualifying employee's terms and conditions of employment.

(7) Any complaint under subsection (6) above shall be referred to, and determined by, such arbitrator as may be agreed by the qualifying employee and the person to whom the complaint was made or, at the request of either of them, by a panel of three arbitrators appointed by the Secretary of State and consisting of—

(a) a person who appears to the Secretary of State to be representative of employers in the railway industry;

(b) a person who appears to the Secretary of State to be representative of employees in the railway industry; and

(c) an independent chairman.

(8) A scheme may make such incidental, consequential, supplemental or transitional provision as appears necessary or expedient to the person making the scheme.

(9) A scheme may make different provision for different qualifying employees or for qualifying employees of different classes or descriptions.

(10) A scheme shall not come into force unless it has been approved by the Secretary of State or until such date as the Secretary of State may, after consultation with the maker of the scheme, specify for the purpose in giving his approval.

(11) In the application of this section in relation to Scotland, any reference to an arbitrator shall be taken as a reference to an arbiter.

(12) In the application of this section to Northern Ireland, for any reference to section 4 of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 there shall be substituted a reference to section 4(4) to (6B) of the Contracts of Employment and Redundancy Payments Act (Northern Ireland) 1965.

(13) In this section—

"qualifying employee", in the case of any scheme, means a person who, immediately before the coming into force of that scheme—

(a) is an employee of—

(i) the Board;

(ii) a wholly owned subsidiary of the Board; or

(iii) a company which is wholly owned by the Franchising Director; and

(b) is not assigned solely to duties in that part of his employer's undertaking to which he is, or is to be, assigned by that scheme;

"scheme" means a scheme under this section;

and expressions used in this section and in Part I above have the same meaning in this section as they have in that Part.")

Mr. Freeman: I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I understand that the Opposition do not want to move amendments (a) and (b).

Mr. Freeman: For the convenience of the House I shall make a few comments about employment and the provisions of TUPE. Several trade unions have expressed concerns about the interpretation of this group of amendments.

I shall mention two basic points. First of all, there is no doubt that the acquired rights directive and the provisions of TUPE apply to the railway industry. That is Government amendment No. 317, and there is enshrined in the Bill a clear reference to the application of TUPE. There is no doubt that, in a transfer of undertaking from one ownership to another, whichever undertaking it is, the provisions of TUPE apply. That protects the terms and conditions of employment.

Mr. George Stevenson (Stoke-on-Trent, South): What might those conditions be at the time of transfer?

Mr. Freeman: The terms and conditions of employment under the TUPE regulations include, obviously, the pay and conditions, the hours of work and the conditions of work. They do not include pension rights. They apply throughout industry. The railways are not unique. It is not a matter for me, as a Transport Minister, to define the acquired rights directive or the provisions of TUPE, [illegible] they will apply in any change of ownership in the railway industry.

Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody (Crewe and Nantwich): In a case in my constituency, various people were informed that, unless they agreed to transfer automatically, they would not only lose their employment but would be at considerable risk in relation to any redundancy payments. Will the Minister give us an undertaking that any railwayman or woman who is required automatically to transfer to another private undertaking will not be penalised with new contracts and new terms of employment, but will, if he or she wishes, be able to retain his or her full entitlement at that moment and for his or her continuing contract?

Mr. Freeman: I can give that assurance, because the law requires those terms and conditions of employment to transfer cleanly, without any amendment or compromise. What happens to the terms and conditions thereafter is a matter for voluntary negotiation between the employee and the employer. The hon. Lady shakes her head, but I am citing the law. I can give the hon. Lady the assurance that the provisions of TUPE, which apply whether it is Marks and Spencer, Unilever, ICI or the railway industry, are clear and unimpeded. The Bill does nothing about their application.

The second—and, I suspect, more important—subject of the debate is Government amendment No. 253. That is where the misunderstandings have arisen. I shall seek to allay them. Government amendment No. 253 is new clause 86. That allows British Rail or the franchising director to remove uncertainties where there is double employment in British Rail at present between different divisions of British Rail—that is to say, the individual is not wholly employed.

I cite the example of drivers who drive both the Gatwick express, which is InterCity, and trains on Network SouthEast. The driver may spend 50 per cent. of his time driving one set of trains and 50 per cent. the other. We are advised that, as the driver in that case is not wholly employed by one enterprise in British Rail, if there is a transfer to a private sector franchisee, the provisions of TUPE might not apply. That is the legal advice that is available to the Department of Transport. What clause 86 does, therefore, is to enable individual employees who are working for two distinct businesses to be assigned to one of them.

I hope that the assignment will be made with the voluntary agreement of the individuals involved and that agreements with the trade unions about the negotiating

[Mr. Freeman]

procedures that should be followed will be honoured. Once the assignment is made, without question the provisions of TUPE will apply when the undertaking is transferred—for example, from complete ownership by British Rail to a franchising company.

New clause 86 makes it clear that, if it could be argued that an individual's terms and conditions of work had been changed by the assignment, there is a process for compensation and independent arbitration to deal with any dispute between British Rail and the individual involved. I think that that is fair, and I hope that I have cleared up any misunderstandings.

Mr. Prescott *rose*——

Mr. Wilson *rose*——

Mr. Prescott: There seems to be a bit of competition.

We do not wish to take a great deal of time on the amendment, but having discussed amendments nos. 6 and 31, we have skipped over important debates on passenger transport executives, competition, the disabled, codes of practice and consultative committees, to reach the 18th debate. The others were all important amendments, but due to the guillotine we have had to miss them. However, it is important to place on record the fact that we have missed them out and have begun an important debate on TUPE.

The amendment may seem to be technical—indeed, it is often introduced as a technical amendment—but its implications are considerable and complex. No doubt in the other job that I shall have to do shortly I shall have to understand the subject better than I do at present.

The subject that is causing concern has been mentioned by the Minister and arises directly from a change since the issue was first mentioned in Committee by my hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson). Then, the Government made it clear that they intended to include in the Railways Bill—in clause 82, I believe—a statutory provision to ensure that all transfers would be covered.

In the debate, it was said that the present trade union regulations—TUPE—would still apply. However, the Minister still felt that it was important to contain the provision in the Bill. He said:

"Clause 82 has been included in the Railways Bill to apply TUPE to all kinds of transfers resulting from the privatisation of BR. Certain transfers may be of undertakings forming part of BR that are not properly regarded as commercial. Other transfers may include a collection of property rights and liabilities, which would not normally be regarded as an undertaking, because, for example, they are not a going concern."—[*Official Report, Standing Committee B,* 11 March 1993; c. 773.]

The Minister was concerned that in some operations within British Rail, commercial and non-commercial, workers would normally be transferred from the various organisations. Reorganisation has created problems involving identifying employees with specific parts of the operation. The Minister mentioned the Gatwick operation, where some drivers use 30 per cent. of their time on the Gatwick run and are unable to work on other parts of the railway network. The problem is whether those workers should be identified with a specific company.

I think that one case was known as the Butts End case. The European Court identified cases in which people had not worked for a company long enough to qualify as full-time workers with the company. Many such examples occur when an organisation such as British Rail is split up into different operations. Will ticket sellers be selling tickets for Regional Railways or InterCity? Who are they employed by? Unless those sellers are placed in separate ticket offices—as has recently occurred at Victoria in relation to the Gatwick service—difficulties are created.

No doubt exists about employees who are directly employed full time in a company, as any transfer from that company to another company would be covered by the regulations, but clause 82 and the proposals in the Lords amendments have caused considerable concern. The central issue involves employment rights such as conditions, redundancy rights, and even concessionary travel—another issue addressed by the Minister in Committee—which constitute an individual's property and employment rights.

I think that the Minister hopes that he can make it clear, through the amendment, that those people who may be caught between one situation and another will now be identified as working with one employee——

Mr. Freeman: Employer.

Mr. Prescott: One employer. I thank the Minister.

In the process of their changing—for whatever reason—from one company to another, an employee's conditions of employment can be changed, which is what is suggested in the amendment. Where such changes take place, compensation will be paid. In that situation, I presume that it will be paid by the taxpayer.

10 pm

There is a fear—I believe that it has some substance—in relation to people who may be transferred from one company to another in the reorganisation of the industry prior to privatisation clearly being transferred from one undertaking to another. It may well be a judgment that that undertaking—track authority, say—decides that it wants to keep only X per cent. of the employees, or wants them to go to another company. If the worker does not accept that, he would receive compensation under the Bill.

Where Gatwick drivers did not want to spend 100 per cent. of their time driving the Gatwick route, which is one of the cases at the moment where the first shadow franchise is in operation, the drivers on those trains were entitled to move anywhere in the system. However, I presume that the shadow company can now say to an employee, "You will have to work for us 100 per cent." If that employee does not want to, disagreement can be registered between the employee and employer. If the employee is not prepared to accept the new conditions of employment—as that is what they represent—he is entitled to receive compensation, to seek employment elsewhere or to go to arbitration if there is disagreement as to the extent of the compensation. Those complexities come directly out of the reorganisation and they threaten the certainties of people's employment rights.

There is another matter that causes some concern, and on which I want to question the Minister. Concern has been expressed that the Government may have the possibility of causing reorganisation and changes in conditions of employment prior to privatisation. That is an act of transfer that will not necessarily guarantee compensation. Some railway employees feel that that is the intention of the reorganisation. Will the Minister reassure us that any changes or reorganisation which take place prior to the privatisation will be covered entirely by the regulations, and guarantee employees their rights, as was intended in clause 82?

I believe that clause 82 is being removed and replaced with an amendment under TUPE which has no statutory guarantee in the Bill. The scope is being widened to cover other groups of people who would not have been covered by clause 82. Will the Minister say whether in that matter, which is highly technical but has considerable consequences for employees, he considers that shadow companies will seek to reorganise the labour force—reduce it if necessary, or get rid of workers—ready for what might be considered to be a move away from full-time to part-time labour by the new company?

Finally, does the Minister have any estimate of what the compensation is likely to cost the taxpayer? I recall one other taxpayer's guarantee in the reorganisation contained in the Dock Work Act 1989. The Government's estimate at the time was something like £20 million, but it turned out to be about £200 million—all to return the docks to another kind of casual labour, which we are beginning to see develop in the docks.

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) asked me four questions. The hon. gentleman is right to say that in Committee the law had not clearly resolved the problem of distinguishing between commercial and non-commercial undertakings that were being transferred. But we now have the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993, section 33 of which resolves that issue. I can therefore assure the hon. Gentleman that clause 137(6) of the Railways Bill now applies TUPE. It applies the new provisions in the 1993 Act and there should be no cause for any concern or ambiguity.

On the hon. Gentleman's second point on concessionary travel, my hon. Friend the Minister for Transport in London would have said had we discussed it, and on numerous other occasions has given assurances, that we regard the concessionary travel arrangements as covered by TUPE, so they cannot be abridged. The responsibility of employers to maintain the concessionary travel arrangements is clear under the law. The franchising director has the power to enable that duty on the part of employers to become effective, and he will do that through the train companies that will operate.

Mr. Prescott: Does that mean that the employer will have to buy those concessionary passes? For example, when Sealink was privatised, there was a concessionary fare right and Sealink had to buy that right from British Rail to provide the concessionary passes to the people. If the franchising director has the power of enforcement, will it be a condition of the franchise that those concessionary passes are purchased and that, if they are not, the employees can take action against the franchisee as being in breach of the franchise agreement?

Mr. Freeman: The arrangement proposed is that the railway companies, on behalf of their employees, will make a payment to the franchising director, and that companies carrying the employees of other companies will reflect the cost of doing that in their franchise bids for subsidy. We will be happy to set that out more fully at the appropriate time, but I can assure the House that there is no intention to make any significant change. I do not foresee any change in the concessionary travel arrangements.

Mr. Wilson: The change that has been effected by the removal of clause 82 is not technical but substantive. The main difference is that, if TUPE was positively written into the Bill, TUPE would apply—end of story. However, where TUPE is not specifically written into the Bill, every case will be considered on its merits. The basis of TUPE is that every case is different. That is what the case law shows. Every successor employer who seeks to demonstrate that TUPE does not apply will be able to turn that into a legal marathon in order to do so. Therefore, rather than TUPE having a clear-cut application in every case, it will be up to the employees to prove that TUPE applies in any specific case.

Mr. Freeman: I do not believe that that is a fair representation of the position. Clause 137 clearly shows that the provisions of TUPE shall apply in the changes that will affect the railway industry. As to how each individual is affected and how he might make claims, I am sure that the hon. Gentleman is right. That is the process of the law. But I am certain that, because we have put the application of TUPE on the face of the Bill, that will remove any doubt.

The third question put by the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East was whether there would be any effect on national terms conditions of employment. I am happy to give him an unqualified assurance that there will be no such effect in terms of the provisions of amendment No. 253 which foreshadows the introduction of a new clause as a result of the assignment, which I hope will be voluntary, of individuals to one particular undertaking within British Rail where they work for two or more.

The hon. Gentleman then asked about shadow franchises and whether they would be a mechanism for getting rid of staff. No, this is a genuine attempt to clarify the full-time employment of individuals so that the provisions of TUPE can apply.

If there are continuing concerns on the part of the unions, to which I have already written twice and with which I have had two meetings, I should be happy to have further meetings or correspondence, and perhaps the hon. Gentleman will encourage them to write to me. I hope that, with those remarks, the House will see fit to approve the Lords amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

Subsequent Lords amendments agreed to.

Clause 121

PENSIONS.

Lords amendment: No. 295, in page 121, line 32, at end insert—

("( ) Nothing in this Act shall relieve the Secretary of State of any duty imposed by section 52D(2) of the Transport Act 1980.")

Mr. MacGregor: I beg to move, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: With this, it will be convenient to take the following: Lords amendments Nos. 410 to 415, Lords amendment No. 416, Government amendment (a) thereto, and Lords amendment No. 417.

Mr. MacGregor: There was a discussion on this issue today. Before I come to the technical aspects of the amendments, I will remind the House of the important background to what has been agreed on the subject of pensions. I will repeat the four points that both I and the Minister made earlier.

[Mr. MacGregor]

The first point is that the assets which will move from the existing British Rail scheme to the closed fund—the subject about which we are primarily talking—will be determined on an independent actuarial valuation. I repeat the point, because it is important that it is made clear to all pensioners. There is no question of the funds being siphoned off in any way other than for the purposes of the payment of pensions. The fund will be under the control of the trustees and they will have a fiduciary duty to the trust members. There is no way in which the Government would either wish or be able to purloin any of the funds. I underline that point, because that accusation has been put around the country. It is not our wish in any way, and I hope that that is explicit.

The second point is that the fund will now have the added protection of a solvency guarantee from the Government. That is a totally new position and one to which I shall refer again later. The third and fourth points, which were widely welcomed and acknowledged by my hon. Friends, are that we have given the pensioners an extremely good deal. In addition to that guarantee, they will have an inflation-linked pension. The guarantee for solvency means that they have a guarantee on VAT, which at present they do not enjoy. In addition, the trustees will be able to use up to 40 per cent. of any surpluses in the fund and that is roughly the figure that is used at the moment for the payment of benefits.

Unlike most other funds there is a Government guarantee, an inflation index-linked pension guarantee, and there is the additional ability—the big difference from other index-linked pensions—to benefit from surpluses. That is the background and we have fairly and generously carried out our commitment to the pensioners. Certainly I wished to do that.

The grouping of amendments deals with Government payments under the Transport Act 1980. I will first deal with amendment No. 416 because most of the others in the group follow on from it. The memorandum of understanding between the Government, BR and the BR pension fund trustees deals with protecting the pensions of existing, deferred and future BR pensioners after privatisation while protecting the taxpayers' interests.

The solvency guarantee for the closed fund for existing pensioners, with the agreement that those pensioners may benefit from up to 40 per cent. of any future surplus and the promise of a similar guarantee to the BR residuary section of the joint industry scheme should that section at any time become seriously unstable, secures the future for all BR pensioners present and future. The provisions of the amendment are designed to provide the agreed protection for the taxpayer's interest.

It would be anomalous to continue the supply of public funds under section 52 of the Transport Act 1980 in circumstances in which they were not yet required, because the scheme now has the copper-bottomed security of an absolute solvency guarantee that is backed by public funds. That produces a fundamental difference—a guarantee from the taxpayer—that was never there before.

The hon. Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell) referred to the situation in 1980 and said that he understood that the position then was, "If your pension went bust, you'd had it." I think that those were pretty much the words he used. The difference now is that, if the situation arises of the fund being deficient, he has not had it. That is a big difference. It is a complete change from the position in 1980. Now he will continue to receive the pension guaranteed by the taxpayer. That is a fundamental difference.

Lords amendment No. 416 introduces three new sections—52B, 52C and 52D—into part III of the Transport Act 1980. The purpose of section 52B is to terminate the support contributions currently payable under section 52 of the 1980 Act in respect of the unfunded obligations acquired by any new pension scheme which has been given a Government solvency guarantee. So the contributions cease where there is a Government solvency guarantee, which is, above all, the closed existing pensioners fund.

10.15 pm

In place of the continuing contributions, a new obligation is proposed under which substitution payments will be made in circumstances to be prescribed by order. As I said, we intend to apply those arrangements principally to the new pensioners' closed section of the joint industry scheme, in line with the memorandum of understanding. But section 52B can equally be exercised in relation to the residual BR section of the joint industry scheme to which I referred earlier if a solvency guarantee is given in the event of the joint actuaries certifying the instability of the fund.

Mr. Prescott: It is complicated.

Mr. MacGregor: I agree that it is a complex and technical matter. That is why I was careful to stick firmly to forms of words which will be understood by everyone involved when they are read in *Hansard*.

Subsection (5) requires a determination of the capital value of the unfunded obligations. It is worth spending a moment on that because a related issue was raised this afternoon. Subsection (7) (c) provides for the substitution payments to be made in circumstances prescribed in the substitution order. Until the payments have been made or the scheme has been wound up, the Government's liability will not be discharged.

Subsection (7) provides for interest to accrue. The formulation is sufficiently wide for an interest rate to be specified which can equate to that which could otherwise have been earned by the scheme if the trustees had received the cash. In other words, the Government's liabilities to the guaranteed new scheme will continue with interest on the outstanding balance as assets of the scheme until the prescribed circumstances provide for the substitution payments to be made. That obligation, with interest accrued, will be included in every valuation. Therefore, it will be part of the valuation leading to the surplus from which direct payments in cash will go to the pensioners.

Mr. John Heppell (Nottingham, East): Does the Secretary of State agree that, while the Government have the option not to pay anything into the fund if they do not want to, that is of little interest to the people in the pension fund, because nothing says that the Government have to pay the whole amount into the fund? So the money accrues with more and more interest but does so in the Treasury coffers and not in my pension fund.

Mr. MacGregor: That is not accurate. In circumstances where there is a surplus in the fund as a result of the obligation plus interest, there will be a direct and

immediate benefit to the pensioners. That will contribute to the 40 per cent. of surplus which can be paid directly to them. It is a meaningful provision. It means that the obligations exist. I am surprised that the hon. Gentleman does not think that the interest payments matter very much. We were accused earlier of not putting cash in, and therefore not enabling the pension fund to gain anything from that obligation.

With interest applied, there will be a roll-up in the fund. That will contribute to the surplus. So the amendment has real meaning and could mean real cash for the pensioner.

Mr. Heppell: Is the Secretary of State saying that the contributions that the Government are committed to paying under the 1980 Act will continue to be paid? If not, is he saying that the pension fund can receive those payments when it asks for them but not when the Government decide that it does not need it? If so, the Government will say that the fund does not need the contributions because it has a surplus. So the surplus would gradually be reduced. Is it the Government's intention to pay, because I have evidence to the effect that their intention is effectively to reduce the contributions depending on the surplus of funds?

Mr. MacGregor: No. Let me make it clear. As I have already said, and as is clear in the amendments, there will not be a direct payment of cash to the pension fund as there was previously because that is now replaced by the solvency guarantee, which is a fundamental difference. There will be a calculation of the unfunded obligation, which will be included in the fund for the purposes of valuation and therefore for the purposes of surpluses, plus the interest that I have already mentioned, which can and will lead to real benefits.

Mr. Prescott: I agree that it is a complex area, but what the Secretary of State has said means that the Treasury, certainly at the moment, will be saving the annual payments that it makes right up to the period when an assessment is made and the IOU has to be delivered. What is the estimate of the amount that the Treasury will be saving for the rest of decade?

Mr. MacGregor: There is no estimate at the moment. The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) must remember that the taxpayer has a liability and commitment, and there is no way in which the pensioner will lose by this arrangement at present, for the reasons that I have just described.

I shall now deal with the point about timing. The new section 52D, which has been causing concern, includes provisions relating to directions given under the powers contained in sections 52A and 52C and orders made under section 52B. I shall first explain the technicalities. Orders under section 52B will be subject to the negative resolution procedures in common with the other order-making power in part III of the Transport Act 1980. However, section 52D(1) requires prior consultation with the trustees on any such order and section 52D(4) requires a copy of the solvency guarantee to be laid before each House when or before an order is laid. That is the point to which the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East was referring this afternoon.

We are currently in discussion with the pension fund trustees as to how we deal with those extremely complex and technical matters in order to fulfil the arrangements under the memorandum of understanding and the arrangements that I have just described. Those discussions will lead to the laying of the order before the House some time early next year, when we have completed it.

The House will know that this closed fund arrangement does not come into effect before next autumn, so it will be laid before the House well before that and the House will debate and decide on the matters. It will be by negative resolution, but that will enable the House to decide.

Mr. Cryer: There is a problem with laying negative procedure orders. Can the Minister guarantee that, when the order is laid, it will not come into force before Parliament has had the opportunity to make a decision? I must draw to the attention of the Minister examples of cases where orders have been laid in August, immediately after the beginning of the summer recess, which have come into force during the recess before Parliament has had a chance to debate them. Is the Minister saying that, after consultation with the trustees, Parliament will have the chance to make a decision? That assurance must be meaningful so that it will not be a case of trying to roll something that has already come into law.

Mr. MacGregor: I take the point made by the hon. Gentleman. Setting up the scheme will require an affirmative order. As I have said, the scheme is intended to come into operation as a closed fund in October. I understand that it would not be fair either to the pensioners or to the House to follow the sort of timetable that the hon. Gentleman suggested, and it is certainly not our wish to do so. It will obviously depend on how our negotiations go and I cannot give a complete guarantee, but I hope that I have said enough to indicate that I wish to meet his point.

Part of the whole commitment that we have given is that the scheme will come to both Houses for approval. That leads to the——

Ms Glenda Jackson: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. MacGregor: I should get on, because I can then explain the position in total.

That leads to section 52D(2), which was introduced as an amendment on Report in the other place. It would require the prior written agreement of the trustees to be obtained before the Secretary of State laid an order under section 52B. Our amendment (a) to amendment No. 416 will delete that requirement.

I do not see how the House can accept Lords amendment No. 295. As the hon. Member for Wrexham (Dr. Marek) rightly recognised, it could prevent a proposal, in relation both to the scheme as a whole and to public expenditure, from coming before the House. It would give the trustees an effective power of veto over the Government introducing secondary legislation, or control over the timing of payments, under the Transport Act 1980, to the guaranteed BR pensioner scheme.

I have made it clear that the memorandum of understanding, which I have fully read, provides for the trustees' agreement, but it would be wrong to provide in legislation for any private individual or group such as the trustees to have such power in primary legislation. I have been looking at past examples, and that would be unprecedented.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. MacGregor: Let me finish the point. There is a genuine problem, but we have done everything that we reasonably can to solve it. First, the proposed new section requires consultation with the trustees. It is clearly our intention and desire to seek and obtain agreement with the trustees on such matters. We have, as I have already said, started discussions with them. We have put a proposal to them and we await their response. It will be in the interests of all the parties concerned that agreement is reached.

However, we have to protect Parliament. A group of trustees might be able to withhold the putting of proposals before the House or control—having a veto means control—public expenditure proposals put before the House. Ministers will be answerable to Parliament for the way in which they exercise their order-making power. As taxpayers' funds are involved, we believe that that should be a decision for the House and not one taken elsewhere.

I hope that that makes clear what the difficulty is and why we have striven to overcome it. There is no duplicity. We have ended up with an extremely good deal for the pensioners. That is the most important point of all. We have sought to protect Parliament's interest. We have enabled the House to decide on what is quite a technical issue, once we have worked it through with the trustees. I believe that that is a sensible resolution.

I know that the matter will be debated for some time. I assure the House that the remaining amendments in the group are consequential or technical. I commend the other amendments to the House.

Mr. Prescott: When I spoke on the guillotine motion, I made clear my position, and that of the House, over the Government's action on the pensions. I know that other hon. Members have only the best part of an hour in which to speak, so I shall not go into the amendments in detail. The Secretary of State did so, and he spelt out his position, as was proper, because many people will be reading the report of the debates. However, I shall not follow him up that alleyway, because there is not enough time.

The essential issue about the pensions was determined at the beginning, when the Government decided to divide the pension fund into separate groups for separate companies. The Government often said that the tax authorities had forced them to do that, but that is not quite correct, because the tax authorities allow two ways to organise a pension fund.

A general industry fund could have been kept, but the Government decided to reorganise in such a way that it caused a conflict between the bodies, so the tax authorities said that the funds must be reorganised separately, and the problems arise from that. The main concern in this debate has been about the closed fund and pensioners who paid into the 1975 and 1980 funds. The closed fund will now be separated. No extra contributions will be made except those originally identified with the fund—the contribution to be made by the Government for their obligations arising directly from an unfunded pension fund.

That contribution amounts to some £80 million. We could argue about how that is divided between different funds, but it is approximately that amount. As the Treasury will not be paying it every year, it can be calculated to be five or six times £8 million. The Treasury is doing quite well, as it will save £4 billion or £5 billion, possibly more—being a little pessimistic, I think that it will save more—on the basis of providing an IOU.

10.30 pm

The Treasury has undoubtedly gained some assets from the process. It has saved by not paying a contribution to the pension fund, as written into the 1980 legislation. The Government are now offering an alternative—an IOU—and have gained from the process at the pension fund's expense.

At the heart of the debate has been the question whether the Government could reassure the trustees that their actions would meet their original commitment that the pensioners would be no worse off, their security would be guaranteed, and that the Government did not intend to take the funds. I do not agree with that point, but I have already made that clear.

It is only fair to feed into the argument the trustees' views. They have an interest to act on behalf of the pensioners in negotiations with the Government, and must say what they believe the Government intend to do. They recognise that the Government had difficulty in writing the solvency agreement into the Bill, and even recognised certain arguments about the power of veto and whether they could control the fund.

In a properly funded pension fund such as this, which the Government set up when they reorganised pension funds in 1980, the trustees are not obliged to agree with the Government. They have a fiduciary obligation, to which the Secretary of State referred, to manage the fund on behalf of the pensioners. Indeed, when the Government first funded the fund, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, the then Under-Secretary of State for Transport, said that the fund no longer had anything to do with him and that he was obliged only to make a yearly payment. The same person is now trying to get back the yearly payment from that fund because he has discovered that surpluses have been paid.

The memorandum of understanding was the means by which the Government sought to assure the trustees about their responsibilities, rights and protections. The chairman of the trustees believed that it would protect the pensioners. The trustees made it clear that they hoped that, in accepting the Government's break-up of the fund, solvency and a retail prices index on pension payments would be guaranteed.

The Government said that they intended to give those guarantees, but they made other changes. The trustees then agreed that the surpluses that were meant to fund the extra value pension increases which railway pensioners had enjoyed because of the good management of the fund, about which we all agree, were not to be put in a fund on the basis of a 60:40 share. That means that 100 per cent. would have been available to the trustees to distribute as they wished. They chose to distribute it on a 60:40 basis, measuring their liabilities against the incomes that they were receiving from the fund.

Now they have no choice. The Government are telling them not only that they must put 60 per cent. into a reserve fund but that an appointed director must agree any investment policy followed by the fund. It seems from that that the trustees are not in the independent position that they occupied before. The appointed director can determine the moneys to go into the fund and the investment programmes. The introduction of the 60:40 share will affect the solvency of the fund. The understanding makes clear that if there is a problem of insolvency in the fund, the Government, through their appointed trustee, can take over and reorganise the fund.

The charge that I have laid at the Government's door is that they were almost building insolvency into the fund. They were making conditions almost perfect for them to move in, take over the fund and reorganise it. It would then become a sort of unfunded fund and would meet the Exchequer's obligations. That would open the door to taking the assets. That creates uncertainty.

The Secretary of State has had correspondence with the chairman of the board, who feels that he has been let down by the Government because he believed that whatever action was taken had to be agreed with the trustees. We now know that that is not the case, as the amendment makes plain, because the Government now speak about consultation. If the Government feel that they cannot grant the right of veto, the complaint of the chairman of the trustees, as spelt out in the letters, should be attended to.

The Secretary of State has had a number of letters from the chairman of the trustees, Mr. Fowler, on 15, 19 and 26 October. We have no record of any replies. Did the Secretary of State reply to the great concerns expressed by the chairman of the board who thought that he had been duped on the memorandum of understanding?

Mr. MacGregor: I had a meeting.

Mr. Prescott: In his final letter, Mr. Fowler complains that he has sent three letters and has not received a reply. That letter states:

"I am sufficiently experienced in public expenditure matters to know that Government guarantees cannot be given lightly and without sensible controls which protect taxpayers' interests."

That is a fair point. The letter continues:

"Those requirements were recognised in the Memorandum of Understanding."

That was an agreement—peace in our time, pensions in our time—that was made before the debate in the Lords.

Mr. Fowler adds:

"What I had not foreseen when I signed the Memorandum was that the Secretary of State would be given powers to virtually take over the fund if the solvency guarantee were to be invoked."

He was a party to the negotiations and signed the paper along with the Minister of State. I do not know why the Secretary of State did not sign, but perhaps unfolding events have made that clear. Mr. Fowler makes it clear that his understanding of the memorandum was entirely different from that of the Secretary of State.

There is a clear division between the Secretary of State, the Government and the other signatory. I do not know what British Rail says about it.

If it was thought that there was a difference over the guarantees on terms and conditions why was the word "agree" in the memorandum? Irrespective of whether it is in statute, if it is in the agreement with good intent that there will be an agreement with the trustees before anything is done, that should have some meaning. Does the memorandum of understanding still apply? Did the Secretary of State say that he would apply the word "agreement"? What happens if there is no agreement? Will he take unilateral action by telling the House, "I could not get an agreement"? If so, that is consultation. The crucial question is why the Secretary of State does not use the word "agreement".

Mr. MacGregor: Perhaps I may explain again. I was straightforward in explaining the difficulty that we could not avoid the responsibility of the House by granting a veto on matters that should be decided by the House. I shall repeat the exact procedure. We think that we shall reach agreement with the trustees, and that is our wish. When we do, we shall place orders before the House, and it will be for the House and the other place to decide upon them. If there is any disagreement, we shall lay before the House the trustees' comments. That is made clear in one of the sub-paragraphs that I read out. In relation to public expenditure, it is right that the House should decide. There is no question of the Government's taking control and leaving no alternative for the trustees. I repeat that I believe we shall reach agreement.

The hon. Gentleman speaks about the Government effectively taking over the fund. There is no question of the Government's controlling or taking over the fund. However, because the Government, and therefore the taxpayer, are guaranteeing the benefits, we must ensure that the taxpayers' interests are protected. That is the reason for having a Government director on the body of trustees. It is not to control the fund, but simply to ensure that the taxpayer, who has the ultimate liability, is protected should all the funds be paid out to pensioners or otherwise issued.

Therefore, in unreasonable circumstances—I do not believe it will happen, but we have to protect ourselves in legislation—the taxpayers' interests are protected as the taxpayer would be footing the bill. There is no question of the Government's taking over the fund.

Mr. Prescott: We shall have to continue that debate another time, but if the Minister looks at the memorandum of understanding, he will see that his appointed Government director of the trustees,

"whose consent will be required to the distribution of any surplus, strategic decisions on investment policy and other matters"

and anything to do with the

"guarantee of benefits granted from a surplus",

will

"decide on the investment of the special reserve."

That is not the trustees; it is the Secretary of State's appointee acting on his instruction. The trustee company is no longer an independent body.

Why does the Secretary of State appoint a director? Why does he make it clear in the memorandum of understanding that trustees no longer have freedom to make such decisions unless the Government-appointed director agrees? Presumably he will ring up the Department of Transport or the Treasury. How can he consider for a second that the Government are not controlling the fund? I cannot believe that the Secretary of State could possibly have read the memorandum of understanding; if he did, he had a duplicitous way of doing it.

Another example comes from the Minister of State's statement in the other place on 12 October in which he said:

"The Government regard the memorandum of understanding as binding".—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 12 October 1993; Vol. 549, c. 101.]

It may be binding on the Government, but it is totally meaningless. It can mean whatever the Secretary of State wants to interpret it to mean. As the lawyers to the trustees fund said, it has no binding in contract law. It cannot be used to claim that the Government are party to a contract as signatory to the document; it cannot be treated as a contract in law. It has no meaning whatsoever. It achieved what the Government wanted—it won the vote in July in the House of Lords simply by kidding them.

Mr. MacGregor: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Prescott: There is no point in giving way to the Secretary of State, as some of my hon. Friends want to speak.

The chairman's letter continues:

"Third, your proposals, as presently stated, will effectively eliminate any possibility of actuarial surpluses arising. This is contrary to one of the basic principles underlying the Memorandum of Understanding."

The signature to it says it is contrary to what was agreed. Finally, he said that the Government IOU that would replace various funds and Transport Act payments would have serious implications for the fund. He went on to say the claims on the fund which the Government will now treat as an IOU that those claims on the fund will represent some 25 per cent. of the assets now, and that 10 years' later,

"70 per cent. of the assets might be represented by the Government's IOU, thus moving close to an unfunded scheme".

It is the chairman of the trustees saying that.

The Secretary of State can disagree with me, but the trustees seem to have backed my interpretation. I have no doubt that nothing today or in the guillotine debate has put to rest my fears that perhaps not the Secretary of State but the Treasury intends eventually to work with the closed fund to an unfunded scheme where eventually the Government will take over control as they have now under the memorandum of understanding which, presumably, the Secretary of State will impose on the trustees.

The Secretary of State controls the fund. It will eventually move to an unfunded scheme and then the Treasury will make a deal with the pensioners, offering them a price-related, inflation-free business pension fund and they will have access to the £2 billion assets exactly as they did with the National Bus funds. Then, when they have established the formula, they will follow it through in the coal industry and the Post Office. These privatisations are solely about robbing the pensioners of their resources and assets, and that is why we will oppose the measure.

10.45 pm

Mr. Bayley: The pensions issue has been a long and sorry saga, yet the Government still do not recognise that, for most railwaymen and women, their pensions represent their life savings. That is why there has been such an outcry from the pensioners about the Government's proposals for their scheme. The Secretary of State's motion to disagree with the Lords amendment would tear up the Government's obligation to contribute to the pension fund under the terms of the 1980 Act. That obligation arose because of the change in 1975 from a pay-as-you-go pension scheme—similar to the national health service scheme—to an asset-based, funded scheme.

In Committee, the Opposition sought a commitment from the Government that they would continue to meet their obligations under the 1980 Act. On 23 March, the Minister for Public Transport—I am tempted to say the Minister for Roger Freeman—said:

"In 1980, my predecessor—now the Home Secretary—made a commitment under the Transport Act 1980 for the Government to make contributions—now about £70 million per annum—to the pension scheme in order to fund the pre-1975 unfunded liabilities for railwaymen and women. I give my hon. Friend a clear commitment that the Government will continue to make those contributions; they are under an obligation to do so. I am happy to repeat the undertaking that those contributions will continue to be made in the future because the obligations continue."—[*Official Report, Standing Committee B,* 23 March 1993; c. 915.]

The Minister could hardly have been more clear than that.

Mr. Freeman: So that there is no misunderstanding, I must clarify that the commitment that the hon. Gentleman cited was given before the meeting with the trustees in July, when they rejected the outcome of our discussions in Committee and said that they wanted a guarantee that the undertaking of cash payments under the 1980 Act applied to a set of circumstances where there was no state guarantee of an index-linked pension. Everything changed in July.

Mr. Bayley: I refer the Minister to the letter from Derek Fowler, chairman of the trustees, to the Secretary of State, dated 26 October:

"I certainly did not envisage the cash payments would cease indefinitely when I signed the memorandum, hence its reference to retiming."

If there is any misunderstanding, it is on the part of the Minister. In the memorandum of understanding signed on 20 July, the words agreed with the chairman of the trustees were:

"The Government remains committed to support payments to certain BR pension funds."

In October, it became clear to the trustees that that commitment had been abandoned and that the Government intended to return to their previous plan, outlined in their first consultation document on pensions, to grab the pensioners' cash.

On 15 October, the chairman of the trustees wrote to the Secretary of State saying:

"the main purpose in writing to you is to record my grave concern, and that of the Trustee Board, at your decision to change the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding in relation to support payments to certain BR pension funds under the 1980 Act . . . If payments under the 1980 Act cease and are substituted by a non-marketable Government IOU, the implications for the Fund would be very serious indeed. We calculate that in 10 years time the capitalised Transport Act payments would represent some 25 per cent. of the assets of the closed fund. 10 years later . . . over 70 per cent. of the assets might be represented . . . moving close to an unfunded scheme"—

such as was first suggested by the Government and which was withdrawn because of the outcry from the pensioners.

Back in the spring, the Government withdrew their cash grant scheme because the pensioners—the people whose money it is—did not want it. Through a process of leakage of funds that the Government currently have an obligation to pay into the scheme, we shall find in 20 years' time that 70 per cent. of the value of a fund has been removed and replaced with worthless pieces of paper with no tradeable value.

The fund's real assets will be progressively replaced by IOUs. They are not cash and cannot be spent by the fund. It would be inflationary for the Government to print £70 million to place in the fund. As the IOUs have no tradeable value, if the pension fund wants in future to invest in works of art, it can hardly go to Sotheby's and say, "We want to buy a Rembrandt, will you accept our IOU?" If it wants to buy property, it cannot go to Jackson, Stops and Staff and say, "We want to buy this industrial estate. We want to buy this mansion. Will you accept our IOU?" If it wanted to invest in the equity market, it could not go to a stockbroker and offer an IOU.

The Government seek to do by the back door that which they sought to do earlier by the front door—remove the fund's assets. Instead of simply grabbing the cash and putting it into the Treasury, the Government intend to dispense with their obligation to fund the scheme to the tune of £70 million a year.

The second development that arises from the debates in another place is the change in the way in which the fund's surplus will be applied. Pensioners currently have a guarantee that their pensions will rise each year by at least the rate of inflation, and they have the opportunity to benefit from any surplus from the scheme. That has been replaced by an inflation guarantee—I acknowledge that—but also by an ability to benefit from a maximum of only 40 per cent. of any surplus.

Earlier, the Secretary of State told the House that the balance of 60 per cent. will remain in the fund, but will it remain as part of the assets that the trustees will control, or will it—as I understand will be the case—fall under the control of a Government-appointed commissar? If so, it will be part not of the pension fund but of a separate, Government-controlled fund.

I would like some of the pensioners to speak for themselves. I represent a large number of British Rail pensioners, and 350 of them wrote to me. Not one was in favour of the Government's proposals. A Mrs. Pratt wrote:

"I fail to understand the dishonesty of the Treasury, who want to steal our fund to try and get themselves out of the mess they have got themselves into. They seem to have no respect for the elderly, who went without luxuries to pay into the fund."

Mr. Waite wrote:

"How they contemplate such an act and condemn Maxwell for exactly the same behaviour makes one gasp."

Mr. Backshall wrote:

"Comparisons with the morals of the late Mr. Maxwell are hard to resist."

Mr. Carey wrote:

"The sterling work done by the administrators in building up the fund's assets has already benefited British Rail, relieving them of their commitment to contribute to the fund for quite some time . . . I trust you will do all your best to persuade the Transport Secretary to refrain from his intention to take the funds belonging to the railway staff past and present."

These funds were those guaranteed under the 1980 Act, and the Government have an obligation to pay £70 million a year into the scheme as a consequence of the change from

[Mr. Bayley]

an unfunded to a funded scheme. Those are late payments on behalf of people who paid for and accrued their pensions before 1975. For the Government to pay with IOUs is not to meet their obligation to many of my constituents.

It is not good enough. The Government may think that they are winning a great victory tonight by forcing through the Bill and this pension change on a guillotined vote, but it will come back to haunt them at the next election. Rail pensioners will not tolerate their life savings being tampered with by the Government, and the Government will face their Waterloo at the next election because of the way in which they have treated the rail pensioners.

Mr. Alan Williams (Swansea, West): I shall be very brief.

Ministers' record on pensions has been deplorable and devious. As the other place will confirm, there are lies, damn lies and ministerial memoranda.

What on earth is the value of this so-called memorandum? The Secretary of State tried to argue that it has validity. We all know that it has no validity against statute law, which is what we are dealing with tonight. The terms of the statute are what will be judged in the court.

The IOU, like so many other provisions of the Bill, is yet another expression of the Government's inability to work out what they want to do. This is their latest gimmick. What is the point of the IOU? Does it count against public expenditure for the year when it is given? Is it real? Is it an asset that can be used by the pension fund? Of course not. As my hon. Friend the Member for York (Mr. Bayley) said, assets cannot be bought, or good investments made, with an IOU.

The feature of the pension fund has been the good judgment of its trustees, which has been recognised time and again by the Minister for Public Transport, who has paid tribute to the trustees for the way in which they have managed the money. They cannot manage IOUs. What will be the value of an IOU in 10 or 15 years?

It is not good enough for the Minister to pretend that this spurious memorandum offers any protection. The one common feature of the Bill and of the pension proposals has been the Minister's attempt to take powers that go well beyond any that he should need if his objectives are as modest or as honourable as he has claimed.

For proof, one has only to look at paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 to schedule 10, under which the Secretary of State may amend, may decide who is in or who is out, who contributes, what proportion the employee or employer contributes, what amendments are to be made to the old and new schemes, when the schemes will be wound up and even what proportion of assets will be transferred between an old and a new scheme.

The Minister says that the Government will guarantee the new scheme. What is worrying is that they have control over the amount of assets that can be allocated from the old scheme to the new one because, as guarantor of the new scheme, they have a vested interest in transferring as much as possible. There is a clash of interests.

The Bill offers the Government the unprecedented ability to take private assets from people without proper compensation by offering them IOUs that will have a diminishing value in real terms. What protection is there? The Bill proposes that Ministers will consult. Who can be taken in by any pretence that this Government will consult?

I remember the consultation that took place on my local hospital becoming a trust hospital. The representations were about 9:1 against, and virtually every authority of any importance was opposed to the idea. The Minister involved refused to publish the names of those who were in favour but, at the end of the day, he could say that he had consulted, and the hospital became a trust hospital. Consultation does not mean taking note. It is no good the Minister saying that he wants agreement, because the Bill does not state that he needs agreement; the Bill states only that he needs to consult, after which all he needs is an order.

11 pm

In Committee, I referred to one of the tragedies of any party that has been in office too long. I say this without meaning to be patronising, but there are now too many Conservative Members who have never been in opposition and been kicked around by Ministers. Those hon. Members who entered the House when I did, or shortly afterwards, can look back and see how many affirmative orders have been defeated over the years.

What happens when a Minister introduces such an order and the Whips put the squeeze on their Back Benchers? What has always happened will happen with today's rebellion. Let us also bear it in mind that an order is debated for only one and a half hours, so hardly anyone has the opportunity to participate. In addition, an order cannot be amended—one either accepts it or turns it down.

The Bill gives Ministers the power to do what they like with other people's assets. What would the Conservatives think if a Labour Government told them that they intended to do the same with private pension funds in which their constituents had an interest? We may disagree politically, but that is a genuine question because it could happen, although I would hope that we would not do anything so outrageous. However, let us suppose that we did—how would the Conservatives feel? What reassurance would they find in the unamendable affirmative procedure and a one-and-a-half hour debate? What satisfaction would they be able to give to their constituents? That is how we feel now when talking about the people whose interests we are trying to represent.

Mrs. Dunwoody: One of the most depressing aspects of this utterly depressing Bill is the shiftiness with which the Government have dealt with pensions. I do not think that the Government understand the extent of the outrage felt by railway workers about the Government's behaviour. That outrage is valid among people who have contributed to pension funds all their lives but are suddenly being told that the control of those funds is being transferred from the proper trustees and put in the hands of the Government.

During our consideration of this part of the Bill, Ministers said that the original idea was to have agreement. During the negotiations, however, they came to believe that they did not need agreement after all; they merely needed to consult. I am amazed that the Government think that they can treat the House and our constituents with such contempt.

I have literally hundreds of railway pensioners in my constituency—men and women who, despite very low rates of pay, have contributed to pension schemes all their

lives. They believed that their interests would be protected and that the future of the railway industry was such that they would always have the security of knowing that in their old age they would have proper pension provision. They now feel seriously——

Mr. Raymond S. Robertson (Aberdeen, South): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. As someone who is still relatively new to the procedure of the House, may I ask whether it is in order for an hon. Member who chaired part of the Committee's proceedings to take part in the debate when the matter comes back to the Floor of the House?

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): There is no rule on that.

Mrs. Dunwoody: Actually, Madam Deputy Speaker, I have consulted the House authorities, and you may like to know that, in the view of the Chairman of Ways and Means, Lords amendments are not comparable. I chaired one sitting of the Committee, to assist a member of another party who was in a difficult situation. There is no reason why I should have to excuse my behaviour. My constituents require me to speak on their behalf. The intervention by the hon. Member for Aberdeen, South (Mr. Robertson) shows how ashamed Conservative Members are of the Government's behaviour. They do not even dare to listen to Opposition Members making a legitimate case for their pensioners.

The Government would like that case to go by default. They do not want an open discussion; they always want to hide behind semantics and presentation, and to suggest that they are offering genuine guarantees. Tonight, for their own ends, and certainly for their own financial advantage, the Government seek to introduce a scheme which, far from protecting railwaymen, railwaywomen and future railway industry pensioners, puts those people in a less advantageous position and damages their interests.

I believe that the Minister is an honourable man, but I do not think that he realises that many people outside the House are capable of understanding what is happening here. They may not know the difference between an affirmative and a negative procedure, and they may not understand the procedures of the House of Commons or of another place, but they understand something much simpler. They understand that what is important between a Government and the people who vote is trust, faith, understanding, commitment and, above all, the belief that a Government will not seek by some shabby manoeuvre to deprive them of their legitimate rights. People know what the Government are doing, and in due course they will make them pay.

Ms Glenda Jackson: Those who served on the Standing Committee know only too well that the question of what will happen to the British Rail pension fund after privatisation is a nut that the Government have significantly failed to crack time and again. Either they had no proposals prepared, or those that they presented were totally unacceptable not only to the Committee but to the pensioners and to the trustees of the pension fund.

The Secretary of State opened our debate on pensions tonight by saying yet again that he wanted to clarify the position, to calm fears and to allay suspicions. The right hon. Gentleman said that he wished to make four points, although if my memory serves me well he managed to cover only three of those subjects: assets, solvency and what a good deal the Government were giving BR pensioners—as though the pension fund were his to give.

With regard to the assets, the one chink of light and the one way forward for pensioners seemed to come from the memorandum of understanding signed by the Minister—on behalf of the Government, I presume—and by the chairman of the British Rail Pension Trustee Company Ltd. and by a board member. That document was signed on 20 July, but on 26 October the chairman of the trustees wrote to the Minister expressing grave concern about changes that he thought were taking place, although he had believed the memorandum to be binding on all parties.

In one letter, the chairman deals with the issue of assets. He says:

"The indefinite cessation of cash payments under the 1980 Act will accelerate the realisation of marketable assets to pay pensions. It is only on those assets that the Trustees can earn real increases. As those assets are realised the non-marketable Government IOU will represent a larger proportion of total scheme assets, thus diminishing the scope for real increases and disadvantaging pensioners."

In a letter of 26 October to the Secretary of State, the chairman of the British Rail Pension Trustee Company Ltd. touches on the issue of solvency, which the Secretary of State assured us tonight is entirely safe because it is in the Government's hands. He says:

"I am sufficiently experienced in public expenditure matters to know that Government guarantees cannot be given lightly and without sensible controls which protect taxpayers' interests. Those requirements were recognised in the Memorandum of Understanding. What I had not foreseen when I signed the Memorandum was that the Secretary of State would be given powers to virtually take over the fund if the solvency guarantee were to be invoked."

On the issue of the good deal, the chairman, in another letter to the Secretary of State, says:

"your proposals, as presently stated, will effectively eliminate any possibility of actuarial surpluses arising. This is contrary to one of the basic principles underlying the Memorandum of Understanding."

So a man whose entire professional life has been dedicated to the management of pensions funds and who has written to the Secretary of State about the assertions that he made to the House and the country tonight—that the assets of the pension fund are safe, the solvency of the pension fund is safe and pensioners will continue to get a good deal from the fund—believes that the Secretary of State is being so economical with the truth that he puts Scrooge in second place.

One of the points made by the Minister tonight was that there could be no power of veto over Government expenditure. Clearly, that point had occurred to the trustees in the light of the changes that the Government were making to what they had supposed was a binding agreement—the memorandum of understanding.

The British Rail Pension Trustee Company Ltd. sought legal advice, which I quote:

"the new Sections 52B to 52D give to the Government a far greater degree of flexibility than is envisaged in the Memorandum . . . These powers are very broad".

If the powers are taken out of the hands of trustees, they will be exercised to the detriment of scheme members.

"The Government's control over public expenditure only exists because Parliament has given it the necessary powers through legislation. Parliament can therefore impose constraints on those powers."

If only the Government had given Parliament sufficient time to debate that issue.

[Ms Glenda Jackson]

The legal adviser to the British Rail Pension Trustee Company Ltd. says that there are precedents which discount the Government's argument that they would be handing over the power of veto to the trustees:

"Section 33(3) of the British Telecommunications Act 1981 provides a precedent for the imposition of duties on the Secretary of State in making orders. We believe that there may be numerous other examples on the statute book".

I do not think that anyone can argue that the opinions and the evidence that I have presented in this debate come from a party political stance. As hon. Members know, I have the great honour to be a Member sponsored by the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen *[Interruption.]* It never fails to amaze me that I continue to give Tory Members the benefit of the doubt that they can read and hear. This is by no means new information, yet every time I say it, certain Tory Members react as though it is the first time in their lives that it has been presented to them.

My constituents also include British Rail pensioners and their dependents. They believe that, in this as in so many issues, the Government have shown a marked lack of trust for, and sense of duty to, pensioners.

We know that the Government hold pensioners in fairly low esteem. They intend to introduce a whole range of measures that will impinge on pensioners' life styles with great cruelty. In this regard, however, I feel that the Government have absolutely no right to any respect. As Opposition Members told the Secretary of State earlier, the way in which the Government have attempted to take the British Rail pension fund away from the people to whom it most justifiably belongs in order to buy their way out of their economic incompetence is disgraceful, and they should resign.

11.15 pm

Mr. Heppell: I shall not speak for long, because I spoke for some time in the guillotine debate. However, I should like some guarantees from the Secretary of State.

I take great exception to being patronised by the Secretary of State about what he has given me. The fact that I will get an inflation-proof pension, the fact that I shall be able to share in some of the surpluses and the fact that I now have a pension that guarantees solvency do not make me feel a great deal better, as I enjoyed all those benefits before. I had no guarantee, but I had solvency.

I had an inflation-proof pension, with benefits from the surpluses. Indeed, for some of the last few years of my time on the railways I paid half contributions, because of the contributions holiday for both my employer and myself: the surpluses were that healthy. The scheme was completely solvent: no one had any worries about its solvency until the Government introduced their privatisation plans.

I will not thank the Secretary of State for his guarantee of solvency. I will not say thank you for something that I had in the first place, which the Government then took away from me; nor will I say thank you to the Government for giving me interest on money that they borrowed from me.

Let me quote from a statement made by the Minister on 22 April. It is similar to what others have quoted. There is no doubt in my mind that the Secretary of State made a promise—a promise like many others that I have been given by him and the Minister about my pension. The Minister said:

"The Bill does not yet contain amendments to the Transport Act 1980. These are likely to be necessary in order to continue the payment of Government contributions to successor schemes—a commitment the Government have already given. These amendments will be brought forward at a later stage."—[*Official Report, Standing Committee B*; 22 April 1993; c. 1296.]

There is nothing ambiguous about that. The Government are going to continue to pay their contributions to the scheme. And so they should: a promise was written into the Transport Act 1980 that, because the Government had underfunded my pension scheme, they would guarantee contributions each year.

At about 8.30 pm on 25 March 1980, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State—the right hon. and learned Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke), now Chancellor of the Exchequer—made that promise. It may be necessary to bring him to the House to explain to the Secretary of State and the Minister what that promise meant. They are seeking to welsh on it—to welsh on me, and on other pensioners. I do not think that that should be allowed. There is no reason why those contributions should be removed.

However, there is a memorandum of understanding. It seems that the Secretary of State's understanding is different from that of the trustees. I do not like that memorandum and would criticise my trustees for signing it. I do not see why I should be obliged to lend the Government money from my pension fund. The trustees are obviously much more generous than me, recognise the difficulties of the Government, the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and have decided that, instead of taking the contributions, they will lend them to the Government, who can have them on loan.

I should be happy if it were merely a loan, but I have no doubt that it is not a loan. If I am wrong, I am happy to give way to the Minister or the Secretary of State so that I may be told when the loan will be paid back. A loan involves lending money and, at some stage, receiving it back. However, I have heard nothing from the Government to tell me when I will get my money back. One issue that is worrying the trustees now is the fact that the Government sent out a letter to their Back Benchers to placate them and assure them that the trustees were happy.

The trustees have written to say that the letter is wrong. In their letter to Back Benchers, the Government said:

"we all acknowledge that whilst the liability to make payments under the Transport Act 1980 would remain, actual cash drawings under this arrangement should be made only when the Fund needed the cash payment."

Who decides when that payment is needed? That was why the clause had to be included in the memorandum. The trustees recognised the importance of the clause because the loan could be made and the timetable for repayment could be made only with the agreement of the trustees. The Government seek to remove the undertaking that they gave to the trustees. I understand why the trustees are angry.

As part of their privatisation process, the Government wanted to take part of my pension. They wanted to take the surpluses in my pension because they thought that I was receiving too much. In Committee, some Conservative Members asked me what I was moaning about, as I received a good pension. I do not think that I should receive merely a good pension; I think that I should have the best pension that those funds can provide. Every other

DEFECTIVE PRINTING

pensioner is entitled to that. The Government have no right to take part of my pension to stick it in the Treasury because they think my pension is too good—that is not on.

The Government have made it clear, first with their two options and now by their actions, that their intention throughout was to take my money. The biggest irony of the Bill is that, while the Government talk about competition and privatising, they have nationalised my pension.

Mr. Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire, South): I intervene for only one reason: out in the country, tens of thousands of pensioners and potential pensioners are deeply worried. Although many of the issues raised were entirely legitimate and I would like to hear the answers to some of the questions asked by the hon. Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Ms Jackson), the pensioners do not have to worry about the fundamental facts. Their pension is protected, they will receive at least as much as they have always expected or hoped to receive, and nobody is bent on filching anything from them.

If the individual pensions to be received by my constituents and those of other hon. Members were to be tampered with in any way, does any hon. Member believe that a Government of any persuasion would get away with it? Of course they would not.

Ms Hilary Armstrong (Durham, North-West): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Cormack: The hon. Lady, who seeks to intervene and to whom I shall give way in a moment, knows that as well as I do.

Trust has been talked about in the Chamber this evening. There are plenty of hon. Members in the Chamber who always put party interest way below any other. If any Government of any party sought to engage in the sort of pilfering exercise that has been talked of, they would not get away with it. I do not believe for a moment that my right hon. and hon. Friends would ever engage in such an exercise. They know very well that there would be sufficient on the Conservative Benches to stop them if they tried.

Mr. Prescott: The Department of Transport has already been involved in the very process of raiding pension funds. When the National Bus Company was privatised, the pension fund was broken up in a similar manner and the Department made it clear in evidence to the Public Accounts Committee that the sale price of £200 million was made up of about £150 million taken from the pension fund, a surplus which went directly to the Treasury. The Government have already done it. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman was not watching. He could have prevented it but it did happen.

Mr. Cormack: But the hon. Gentleman knows as well as I do that no pensioner has suffered as a result of——

Mr. Prescott: They did.

Mr. Cormack: No, I do not think that that is the case. No individual pensioner has suffered. The point that I am seeking to make can stand any challenge. I of course want to hear what my right hon. Friend the Minister will say when he replies to the debate, but I repeat that no Government, Conservative or Labour, would get away with raiding the individual pensions of any of our constituents, and we do those constituents a disservice by fuelling their anxieties at a time like this.

Mr. John Denham (Southampton, Itchen): The hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) has put one version of the history of the past year's debate on the pension scheme. That is the version that the Government would like us to accept; the version that says that a valiant band of honest men and women have been struggling against great obstacles, legal problems, Inland Revenue difficulties and parliamentary procedures in order to guarantee the future interests of British Rail pensioners.

An alternative view of the history of the past 12 months' debate is that the Government's main objective has been to confuse and to defuse the anger that arose among British Rail pensioners as a result of this move, while at the same time achieving their fundamental objective—a devalued pension scheme which will pay less than would have been the case under the existing scheme, and which brings financial benefits to the Treasury. I believe that time will show that that is the correct view of the past 12 months.

By the time that the Bill reached Committee, I had received, either directly or through my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott), more than 800 letters from railway pensioners in the Southampton area expressing concern about the Government's proposal and supporting the continuation of the existing scheme. That concern continued to mount during the summer months, until the memorandum of understanding was agreed between the Government and the British Rail trustees.

The memorandum of understanding was given wide publicity. I seem to recall that a letter was sent to every individual member of the fund from the trustees outlining its main terms. When that letter was received, the anger collapsed and the momentum of the campaign against the scheme was diffused.

Although those who looked at the scheme closely knew that the scheme on offer was less good than the maintenance of an industry-wide scheme which new entrants to the railway industry would continue to join, they did have a letter from the chairman of the trustees of the British Rail pension fund saying that a satisfactory deal had been reached.

Those pensioners and tens of thousands of others thought that that agreement with the Government was the guarantee. They thought that the agreement was the result of the letters that they had written to their Members of Parliament, and that it would secure their futures in the pension fund. So in July the Government had achieved their primary objective of the past 12 months, which was to stop the wave of anger throughout the country by leading pensioners to believe that their futures were secure.

11.30 pm

That explains the tone of the correspondence between the chairman of the pension trustees and the Secretary of State, to which several hon. Members have referred this evening. In a letter to the Secretary of State dated 26 October, Derek Fowler said:

> "I saw the Memorandum of Understanding as a milestone on the way towards securing Government objectives to secure BR Pensions. The steady erosion of what I thought had been agreed seems to justify the sceptical approach taken by many of my colleagues and others to the Memorandum".

It is not for me to put words into the mouth of the chairman of the pension fund trustees, but it seems to me that, in the publicity surrounding the memorandum of understanding in July, the chairman of the trustees was asked to put his good name and reputation to what has since been used

cynically by the Government to defuse pensioner and public opposition to the move. I regard that action as unjustified.

There are major problems with what is now proposed. They have been highlighted by other hon. Members. If IOUs are substituted for cash payments, as the chairman of the fund points out, that will

"accelerate the realisation of marketable assets to pay pensions. It is only on those assets that the Trustees can earn real increases."

The Bill provides no protection which would prevent the timing of the payments being so phased or delayed as to force the fund to realise marketable assets faster than would have occurred under the existing arrangements.

Every time that the trustees are forced to sell investments which they currently hold, a transfer of the assets of the fund has been achieved, to the saving and the benefit of the Treasury.

Mr. Nigel Spearing (Newham, South): Does not the whole affair have the fingerprints of the Treasury all over it? The hapless Ministers are in the hands of the Treasury. If the principles of the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) are to be put into practice—we all wish they would be—surely the Government must come back with another Bill to return to the status quo. That is the only way in which the criteria of the hon. Gentleman can be observed.

Mr. Denham: I agree with my hon. Friend. He refers to Conservative Members. To those Conservative Members who are feeling secure about their pensioners because they have received a briefing note or letter from the Secretary of State, I point out that in the same letter to the Secretary of State, Mr. Derek Fowler said:

"The letter to your colleagues dated 22 October heightens my concern."

That is what the chairman of the trustees said about the party political propaganda which has been circulated to Conservative Members and is undoubtedly intended for them to reproduce and send to their constituents who are British Rail pensioners. I hope that any right hon. or hon. Member who intends to do that will ensure that he includes the comments of the chairman of the trustees when he writes to his constituents. To do less would not be entirely honest.

At the outset of this exercise, the Government proposed nicking the assets of the pension fund in one go. That gave rise to a howl of outrage, so the Government said that they would not. We knew that they would. They knew that we knew that they would. They knew that we did not quite know how they would do it, so they continued to say that they would not, but they continued to know that they would. Now they are, and they know that they are, and we know that they know that they are, but still they say that they are not. It is clever, but it is cynical and wrong, and for hundreds of thousands of pensioners, it is robbery.

Mr. Stevenson: Having sat through most of the two-day debate without contributing to it, I hesitated to do so at this late hour, but was prompted to intervene by the speech of the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack).

Many of my hon. Friends, and some Conservative Members, have said that the Government do not understand what is happening. Having listened to the debate, I believe that they fully understand what is happening. They know exactly what they are doing. They know the principles that they are establishing in this rotten Bill. If there is a pension fund that the Treasury can get its hands on, the Government will establish the principles, under whatever comouflage or subterfuge afforded by their amendments, to allow that to happen legitimately. My hon. Friends have established that beyond any doubt. The giggling and smiling that I have witnessed from some Tory Members will not camouflage that.

The Secretary of State said that he wanted to clarify the apparent contradiction between the contents of the memorandum of understanding, which was signed in July, and the Government's amendment, which changes the word "agreement" to "consultation". I know that many Conservative Members think about such matters carefully, as the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South said. There is a great deal of difference between the two words. I do not want to rehearse the points made by my hon. Friends, who have adequately and starkly shown the difference between the two.

In attempting to clarify the situation, the Secretary of State caused more confusion. Which is it to be? Is it to be agreement or consultation? He said that there would be negotiations between him and the trustees of the fund, and if they are to be based on the memorandum of understanding, in all good faith—I ask Tory Members to think about that—they will have to be based on agreement. The tragic irony is that, if Tory Members troop through the Lobby in favour of the amendment, they will break faith with the memorandum of understanding. They simply cannot have it both ways. That is a fundamental principle.

Before the Division is called, the House will need a clear statement from the Secretary of State on which word is right. Is it to be the memorandum of understanding or the amendment? Will it be agreement or consultation? I see the hon. Member for Langbaurgh (Mr. Bates) shake his head. I recognise that I am not a public school person, but the thousands of pensioners who will be listening to the debate with great interest will understand clearly that, no matter how you try to camouflage it, you cannot have it both ways. It must be agreement or consultation.

If Conservative Members support the amendment in the Lobby they will have broken faith for party and trust.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. I remind the hon. Member that he should be addressing the Chair.

Mr. Stevenson: I apologise, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am relatively new to the House and am grateful for your guidance.

The comments of the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South touched on the issue of trust and faith. In response to an intervention by my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott), he mentioned the National Bus Company employees. My hon. Friends the Members for West Bromwich, East (Mr. Snape) and for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell) said that they were British Rail pensioners. I suspect that I am one of the few Members who used to belong to the Bus Employee Superanuation Trust, to which thousands of bus workers contributed year after year. When the Government privatised it, they gave £150 million of our money to the Treasury, which reduced my entitlement. The Bus Employee Superannuation Trust is now all but destroyed as a direct result of legislation supported by the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South.

If hon. Members want evidence, they need not wait for the film but can read the book. It is all there for them to see.

The case has unquestionably been made that the Government intend to act in the same way again, and I urge all Conservative Members with a conscience to support us in the Lobby.

Mr. Wilson: It is fitting, and a metaphor of our proceedings, that we should end tonight's debate with a contrast between fantasy and realism. The hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) made a characteristic, Vicar-of-Bray contribution, in which he tried to show the world that all was well. But I fear that anyone who is counting on the happy consensus which he envisaged, based on Conservative Members suppressing party loyalty while they safeguard the interests of pension funds and the national good, will be deeply disillusioned.

As my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-on-Trent (Mr. Stevenson) pointed out, and as the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South clearly did not understand, we have seen this scenario before. He told us that Conservative Members would put aside party loyalties—all the matters which we pray about—and carefully guard pension funds, and that no Government of any complexion would lay their hands on a pension fund, heaven forfend. But it happened with the National Bus Company. The gains to the Treasury from the net receipts from winding up pension funds amounted to £120 million. And one of the people directly involved in it has cast some realism on the debate.

However, tonight we are discussing not £120 million but big bucks. We are discussing money that makes a serious dent in the public sector borrowing requirement. We are discussing the scale of precedent that could be applied to the coal pension fund, the Post Office pension fund and, I suppose, every other pension fund on which the Government have set their eyes.

If we are waiting for the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South and his men of no fixed allegiance to pass among us ensuring that none of that ill is visited upon society, few of the thousands of pensioners who have written to hon. Members on both sides of the House will regard that as much of a guarantee. They would prefer a guarantee in the Bill to a verbal guarantee by the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South.

Ministers have conspicuously refused to give a guarantee in the Bill at every stage of the proceedings because they intend to get the Treasury's hands on the surplus of the British Rail pension fund. The mystery may never be solved. We may never know the answer to my earlier question about which came first to these malevolent minds. Was it rail privatisation or getting their hands on the pension fund? Did the Government think of rail privatisation and then realise what they could do with the pension fund? Rail privatisation is a disruption of our national railway system, a threat to the whole network through privatisation and fragmentation. Is that the by-product of the grand scheme of getting their hands on the pension funds? That is the $64,000 question, or perhaps it is the £4 billion question.

11.45 pm

The only reason for the fear in the minds of pensioners about what is being done is the Bill to privatise British Rail. If there were no Bill to fragment BR, there would be no insecurity in the minds of railway pensioners. Everything that has been visited upon those pensioners over the past few months is a by-product of the Bill. The responsibility for that uncertainty and concern, which are manifested in the correspondence, demonstrations and petitions, rests with the Government because of what they have set about doing to the railways.

The Government could have set about privatising the railways and still maintained a single pension fund. That could have been done if it were not the Government's intention to get this vast sum for the Treasury. Their only reason for fragmentation is to serve their wider political agenda.

This document in my hand will haunt Ministers and Conservative Members who support the amendment. It is the letter from the chairman of the British Rail Pension Trustee Company Ltd. What I and other hon. Members say is of limited relevance, but this letter is an indictment, because it charges the Government with cheating, giving false guarantees and reneging. With a bit of luck in the other place, the House might have to return to these matters tomorrow. I shall read the indictment. It states:

> "I very much regret the need to have written to you three times in less than three weeks on fundamental differences of view between the Government and the British Rail Trustees. I saw the Memorandum of Understanding as a milestone on the way towards securing Government objectives to secure BR pensions. The steady erosion of what I thought had been agreed seems to justify the sceptical approach taken by many of my colleagues and others to that Memorandum."

In order to win the vote in the Lords, the man who was prepared to give Ministers the benefit of the doubt while his colleagues were not, said less than a week ago, on 26 October, "I was wrong and they were right." That is an indictment of Ministers and we shall pursue this issue at every stage.

We hope that hon. Members such as the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South will remember this night and will not say in three or four years, "We are your guardians." Now is the time to be guardians, and if they fail in that duty no pension fund will be safe, because this is the greatest potential robbery in the history of pension funds. The Members who support the Government in the Lobby will bear a heavy responsibility.

Mr. Freeman: The performance by the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) was dramatic, but it was at variance with the facts. *[Interruption.]* The hon. Gentleman spoke about the fear in the minds of pensioners. The Opposition, not the Bill, have put that fear there. I shall deal with the six substantive points raised in the debate, because I appreciate that the matter is likely to go to the other place and it is important that the facts are on the record. I agree with the hon. Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Mrs. Dunwoody) that this is a sensitive subject for all pensioners. That is why it should be dealt with properly, soberly and rationally, so that we do not incite unnecessary fears in the minds of pensioners.

When the Bill left Committee, we were not speaking about a state guarantee for the pension fund. We were talking about a closed fund for the pensioners—part of the joint industry scheme that had its own assets and trustees. It was at the request of the trustees; it was not my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport who summoned them. They came to the Government and said, "We are not happy with the Bill as it came out of the Standing Committee; we want a state guarantee for the index-linked pensions." That was not part of what we discussed in the Standing Committee and that changed circumstances entirely.

[Mr. Freeman]

Does the hon. Gentleman not realise that a state guarantee for index-linked pensions is of great significance to the public sector? Who has to honour that commitment? It is the Treasury.

Mr. Prescott: The Treasury guaranteed it in the first place.

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Gentleman is quite wrong; the pensioners were not guaranteed by the state. There was no Government guarantee for the pensioners.

Both Opposition Front-Bench Members raised a number of issues. Let us be clear about the answers. First, we are talking about payments to the closed funds and not to the other open funds; therefore, we are talking not about £70 or £80 million but about £50 million. The cash payments will continue to be made to the other funds that are not subject to a state guarantee.

Secondly, we have made it quite clear that the liabilities that continue to accrue under the Transport Act 1980 will be capitalised at the point at which the new scheme is created. The present value of the scheme of future payments will be calculated not by the Secretary of State for Transport, but by the actuaries. That will come to a substantial sum of several hundred million pounds.

Mr. Prescott: When?

Mr. Freeman: That will be calculated when the fund is set up on 1 October 1994. That is the intention. That asset will be on the balance sheet of the pension fund. I accept that we have to ensure that it is properly valued and not worthless; that it has the value that the actuaries put on it for the purposes of calculating the surplus in the pension funds which, up to a certain proportion, can be distributed to the pensioners.

Thirdly, it was agreed by the trustees—the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) seeks to divide the chairman of the trustees from the others. All the trustees agreed that the memorandum of understanding signed by the chairman was right and proper. They gave him their support and it was quite clear in the memorandum of understanding that, in return for the state guarantee on index-linked pensions, there should be payments from the Government under their accruing liabilities only when there was proven need.

The hon. Gentleman asked who is going to establish when that need arises. The answer is that the actuaries have to value the fund. They measure the assets and liabilities every three years. It is not my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State; it is the actuaries.

Fourthly, I look forward to a resumption of discussions as soon as possible in which we will seek to reach agreement with the trustees on the scheduling of any payments that may be made under the 1980 Act, irrespective of need. The trustees want not only cash payment when there is need, but specific maturities of the amount that has been capitalised and put on the balance sheet.

My right hon. Friend the Secretay of State and I will seek to reach agreement with the trustees not only about the scheduling of the payments but about the specific interest rate that is to apply. I know that we will be able to reach agreement and, as my right hon. Friend has said in any case we have to lay before both Houses orders which are a direct result of those negotiations.

Fifthly, the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North talked about the proportion of the fund that these capitalised assets, the accrued liabilities being paid by the Government, accruing from the Government under the 1980 Transport Act might represent of the fund. The hon. Gentleman quoted a example of 70 per cent. We do not recognise that figure; the actuarial advice to the Government is that the proportion will be closer to 20 per cent.—a normal proportion of any pension fund represented by gilt-edged securities.

The hon. Gentleman also raised the issue of the 60 per cent. of the fund—*[Interruption.]* Of course it is true. That will be retained in the fund.

In any pension fund, and certainly the BR pension fund in the past, the 60 per cent. that was not distributed to the pensioners, who usually had 40 per cent. of the benefit of any surplus, went back to the employees and the employer. It left the fund and went to British Rail. The hon. Member for Nottingham, East (Mr. Heppell), when he was a member of the Staff of British Rail, shared in a contributions holiday. That is an example of where the 60 per cent. went. We are now saying that the 60 per cent. will stay in the fund.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North said that the pensions surplus was stolen from the National Bus scheme. However, that was a balance-of-costs scheme, so—unlike BR—it was not entitled to the surplus. That is the difference. The hon. Gentleman's charge was completely out of order.

Mr. Prescott: In view of the time, I thank the Minister for giving way. He gave the impression that he wanted to get the facts straight for the benefit of the other place. Derek Fowler, chairman of the trustees, wrote to the Secretary of State saying:

> "I certainly did not envisage the cash payments would cease indefinitely when I signed the memorandum, hence its reference to the retiming."

That is contrary to what the Minister has just told us.

Mr. Freeman: It is not contrary—*[Interruption.]* It is not. We have made it quite plain that we are not talking about an indefinite cessation of payments. I explained that a few minutes ago, and I repeat it now.

We are grateful to my hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) for what he said. He was right to say that the pensioners have not only a state guarantee of index-linked pensions but a share in the surplus. They have a separate, discrete pension fund, managed by trustees under independent management. That is an excellent deal for the pensioners, and I agree with my hon. Friend that it would be wrong for Ministers in any way to undermine that.

Ministers in the Department of Transport, led by my right hon. Friend, will honour the commitment to reach agreement with the trustees and to come back to the House with orders that will entirely discharge those responsibilities. I commend the motion to the House.

Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment:—

The House divided: Ayes 316, Noes 284.

Division No. 383] **[11.57 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Ruclif)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Riffkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy

Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Timothy Kirkhope and Mr. Andrew Mitchell.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. John Thompson and Mr. Alan Meale.

Question accordingly agreed to.

It being after five hours after the commencement of the adjourned proceedings, MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to Order this day, designated Lords amendments Nos. 296, 324, 379, 414 to 416 and 423 as appearing to her to involve questions of privilege.*

Madam Speaker *then put forthwith the Questions on any amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown to a Lords amendment and the Question,* That this House doth agree with the Lords in an amendment, as amended.

Schedule 10

PENSIONS

Lords amendment: No. 416, in page 170, line 51, at end insert—

("(1B) After the section 52A inserted by sub-paragraph (1A) above, there shall be inserted—

("(1B) After the section 52A inserted by sub-paragraph (1A) above, there shall be inserted—

"Power to substitute obligations under this section for liabilities under s.52(1).

52B.—(1) The Minister may make a substitution order in relation to any occupational pension scheme—

(a) which is a new scheme, within the meaning of Schedule 10 to the Railways Act 1993;

(b) which is designated under paragraph 9(1) of that Schedule (designation of schemes which are to be treated as B.R. pension schemes for certain purposes of this Part); and

(c) in relation to which a guarantee has been given by the Secretary of State under paragraph 9A of that Schedule;

and any reference in this section to a "guaranteed pension scheme" is a reference to such an occupational pension scheme.

(2) The Minister may also make a substitution order in relation to any section of a new scheme, within the meaning of Schedule 10 to the Railways Act 1993, if the section is one—

(a) which is designated under paragraph 9(1) of that Schedule; and

(b) in relation to which a guarantee has been given by the Secretary of State under paragraph 9A of that Schedule;

and the following provisions of this section (and sections 52C and 52D) shall apply in relation to any such section of a new scheme as if any reference to a guaranteed pension scheme included a reference to such a section.

(3) For the purposes of this section, a "substitution order" is an order under this section the effect of which is—

(a) to terminate, from the termination date, the Minister's liability to make to the persons administering the guaranteed pension scheme in question payments under section 52(1) in relation to the scheme; and

(b) to impose on the Minister, in substitution for that liability, an obligation to make to those persons, subject to and in accordance with the following provisions of this section, one or more other payments (the "substitution payments") in relation to that scheme.

(4) Subject to the following provisions of this section, the amount of the substitution payments to be made in the case of a guaranteed pension scheme shall be equal in the aggregate to the sum of—

(a) the amount specified pursuant to subsection (5)(a) as the capital value of the unfunded obligations in the case of the scheme; and

(b) the aggregate amount of any interest which is dealt with as mentioned in subsection (8)(b)(ii) in the case of the scheme.

(5) A substitution order must specify—

(a) the capital value of the unfunded obligations in the case of the guaranteed pension scheme in question, as at the termination date; and

(b) the date which, for the purposes of this section, is to be the termination date in relation to that scheme, being a date not earlier than one month after the coming into force of the substitution order.

(6) Any determination for the purposes of this section of the capital value of the unfunded obligations in the case of a guaranteed pension scheme shall either—

(a) be made by the Minister; or

(b) if the Minister so requires in the particular case, be made by the actuary to the guaranteed pension scheme in question and approved by the Minister.

(7) A substitution order may specify—

(a) the amount or amounts, or the method of determining the amount or amounts, of the substitution payments,

(b) the date or dates on which the substitution payments are to be made,

(c) circumstances (which may, if the Minister so desires, be defined by reference to the opinion of any person) in which substitution payments are to be made,

and may provide for the obligation to make substitution payments to be discharged if the guaranteed pension scheme in question has, in the opinion of a person specified or described in, or nominated under, the order, been wound up.

(8) A substitution order must provide—

(a) for interest to accrue from the termination date on the outstanding balance of the capital value for the time being at such rate, and at such intervals, as may be specified in, or determined under or in accordance with, the order; and

(b) for any such interest which accrues—

(i) to be paid to the persons administering the guaranteed pension scheme in question, or

(ii) to be added to the outstanding balance of the capital value,

(or to be dealt with partly in one of those ways and partly in the other);

and the provision that may be made by virtue of paragraph (a) includes provision for the rate of interest to be calculated by reference to any variable or to be such rate as the Minister may from time to time determine and specify in a notice to the persons administering the scheme in question.

(9) For the purposes of subsection (8), the "outstanding balance of the capital value", in the case of a guaranteed pension scheme, means the capital value of the unfunded obligations in the case of the scheme, as specified pursuant to subsection (5)(a), —

(a) reduced by the amount of any substitution payments made in relation to that scheme; and

(b) increased by any additions of accrued interest under or by virtue of subsection (8)(b)(ii) in relation to that scheme.

(10) Nothing in this section affects the liability of the Board in respect of any relevant pension obligations.

(11) Any sums required for the making of payments under this section by the Minister shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament.

(12) In this section—

"the capital value of the unfunded obligations", in the case of any guaranteed pension scheme, means such amount as is, in the opinion of the person determining that capital value pursuant to subsection (6), the capital equivalent of the payments that would, apart from this section, have been expected to be made by the Minister under section 52(1) in relation to that scheme after the termination date in the case of that scheme;

"occupational pension scheme" means an occupational pension scheme as defined in section 1 of the Pension Schemes Act 1993;

"the terminal period", in the case of any guaranteed pension scheme, means—

(a) if a financial year of the scheme ends with the termination date, that financial year; or

(b) in any other case, so much of the financial year of the scheme in which the termination date falls as ends with that date;

"the termination date", in the case of any guaranteed pension scheme, shall be construed in accordance with subsection (5)(b);

"the termination year", in the case of any guaranteed pension scheme, means the financial year of the scheme which consists of or includes the terminal period;

"trustees", in relation to a guaranteed pension scheme, includes a reference to any persons who, under the rules of the scheme, are under a liability to provide pensions or other benefits but who are not trustees of the scheme.

Adjustments arising in connection with orders under s.52B.

52C.—(1) As soon as practicable after the termination date in the case of any guaranteed pension scheme, there shall be determined, for the terminal period, what proportion of the pensions, increases and expenses payable under, or incurred in connection with, the scheme corresponds to the relevant pension obligations.

(2) Any determination under subsection (1) shall either—
(a) be made by the Minister; or
(b) if the Minister so requires in the particular case, be made by the actuary or auditor to the guaranteed pension scheme in question and approved by the Minister.

(3) The Minister may give a direction to the persons administering a guaranteed pension scheme requiring them to determine the aggregate amount of the pensions, increases and expenses payable under or incurred in connection with the scheme for the terminal period or the termination year and to notify him in writing of their determination.

(4) As respects the termination year of a guaranteed pension scheme, the extent of the liability of the Minister to make payments under section 52(1) in relation to that scheme shall be restricted to a liability to make payments of an amount (the "termination year amount") equal in the aggregate to the product of—
(a) the proportion determined under section 54(1) for that scheme;
(b) the proportion determined pursuant to subsection (1) in the case of that scheme; and
(c) the aggregate amount of the pensions, increases and expenses payable under or incurred in connection with that scheme in the terminal period;
and payments by way of adjustment shall be made by the Minister to the persons administering the scheme, or (as the case may be) by those persons to the Minister, before the expiration of the period of six months beginning with the date of the last of the determinations made under subsection (1) or (3) with respect to the scheme.

(5) Where, in the case of a guaranteed pension scheme, the funding of the relevant pension obligations has, by virtue of subsection (3) of section 54, been left out of account in making a determination under subsection (1) of that section, the termination year amount in the case of that scheme shall be the difference between—
(a) what that amount would have been, apart from this subsection; and
(b) the amount of any income accruing for the terminal period which may be applied towards the payment of such of the pensions, increases and expenses payable under or incurred in connection with the scheme as correspond to those obligations.

(6) The Minister may give a direction to the persons administering a guaranteed pension scheme requiring them to determine the amount mentioned in subsection (5)(b) and to notify him in writing of their determination.

(7) Where payments by way of adjustment fall to be made, interest shall be payable, as from the termination date, by the person liable to make those payments, at the rates and intervals from time to time applicable for the purposes of section 52B(8)(a) in the case of the scheme in question, on so much of the aggregate amount of the payments in question as for the time being remains unpaid.

(8) So much of—
(a) any payment by way of adjustment which falls to be made, or
(b) any interest accrued under subsection (7),
as has not been paid shall be treated as a debt due.

(9) Any sums required for the making of payments under this section by the Minister shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament.

(10) In this section, "payments by way of adjustment", in the case of a guaranteed pension scheme, means—
(a) if the Minister has made payments under section 52(1) in relation to that scheme for the termination year which, in the aggregate, exceed the termination year amount, payment to the Minister by the persons administering the scheme of an amount equal to the excess;
(b) if the Minister has made no payments under section 52(1) in relation to that scheme for the termination year, payment by the Minister to those persons of the termination year amount; or
(c) if the Minister has made payments under section 52(1) in relation to that scheme for the termination year which, in the aggregate, fall short of the termination year amount, payment by the Minister to those persons of an amount equal to the shortfall.

(11) Expressions used in this section and in section 52B have the same meaning in this section as they have in that section.

Orders and directions under sections 52A to 52C: supplemental.

52D.—(1) Any power to make an order under section 52B shall be exercisable by statutory instrument made by the Minister after consultation with the trustees of the guaranteed pension scheme to which the order relates.

(2) The Minister shall not lay before Parliament a statutory instrument containing an order under section 52B unless he has first obtained the written agreement of those trustees that it is appropriate in the circumstances for the order to be made.

(3) A statutory instrument containing an order under section 52B shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

(4) At the time when a statutory instrument containing an order under section 52B is laid before each House of Parliament pursuant to subsection (3), the Minister shall, if he has not already done so, also lay before each House of Parliament a copy of the guarantee mentioned in subsection (1)(c) of that section; but this subsection is without prejudice to the validity of the order in question.

(5) Any power to make an order under section 52B includes power, exercisable in the same manner, to make such incidental, supplemental, consequential or transitional provision as may appear necessary or expedient to the Minister.

(6) Any order under section 52B may make different provision for different cases or for different classes or descriptions of case.

(7) It shall be the duty of any person to whom a direction is given under section 52A or 52C to comply with and give effect to that direction; and compliance with any such direction shall be enforceable by civil proceedings by the Minister for an injunction or interdict or for any other appropriate relief.

(8) Any power to give a direction under section 52A or 52C includes power to vary or revoke the direction.

(9) Any direction under section 52A or 52C shall be given in writing.

(10) In this section—
"guaranteed pension scheme" has the same meaning as in section 52B;
"trustees", in relation to a guaranteed pension scheme, has the same meaning as in section 52B."")

Amendment proposed to the Lords amendment: (a), to leave out lines 254 to 258.—*[Mr. MacGregor.]*

Question put, That the amendment to the Lords amendment be made:—

The House divided: Ayes 314, Noes 132.

Division No. 384] **[12.13 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*	Amess, David
Aitken, Jonathan	Ancram, Michael
Alexander, Richard	Arbuthnot, James
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*	Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*	Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*

Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliffe)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
O'Neill, Martin
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Andrew Mitchell.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.

Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clelland, David
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cox, Tom
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Graham, Thomas
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harvey, Nick
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hoey, Kate
Home Robertson, John
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kirkwood, Archy
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morley, Elliot
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Oiner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Parry, Robert
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Purchase, Ken
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Snape, Peter
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steinberg, Gerry
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Dennis Skinner and
Mr. Bob Cryer.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment, as amended:—

The House divided: Ayes 307, Noes 111.

Division No. 385] **[12.25 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Allason, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*

Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Andrew Mitchell.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Cleland, David
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Etherington, Bill
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Graham, Thomas
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harvey, Nick
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hoey, Kate
Home Robertson, John
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McWilliam, John
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morley, Elliot
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
Olner, William
Parry, Robert
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Purchase, Ken
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Snape, Peter
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steinberg, Gerry
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Walley, Joan
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Dr. John Marek and
Mr. Andrew F. Bennett.

Question accordingly agreed to. [Special Entry.]

Lords amendment: No. 423, in page 173, line 26, at end insert—

("Government guarantees to trustees of certain new schemes

9A.—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this paragraph, the Secretary of State—

(a) shall give to the trustees of any new scheme which satisfies the conditions in sub-paragraph (3) below, and

(b) may give to the trustees of any new scheme which satisfies the conditions in sub-paragraph (4) below,

a guarantee in respect of their liabilities to make payments in respect of pension rights under the scheme.

(2) This paragraph applies in relation to a section of a new scheme as it applies in relation to a new scheme; and any reference in this paragraph to a new scheme, a closed scheme, a pension scheme or a member shall be construed accordingly.

(3) A new scheme satisfies the conditions in this sub-paragraph if—

(a) all the members of the scheme are persons whose pension rights under the scheme are pension rights which have been transferred, so as to become pension rights under that scheme, pursuant to an order under paragraph 4 above; and

(b) the rules of the scheme prevent any member of the scheme from being a participant in the scheme.

(4) A new scheme satisfies the conditions in this sub-paragraph if—

(a) the scheme is a closed scheme; and

(b) at the date on which the scheme becomes a closed scheme, all the members of the scheme are—

(i) participants in the scheme to whom pension rights under the scheme are accruing by virtue of their employment with a relevant employer; or

(ii) pensioners or deferred pensioners under the scheme whose pension rights under the scheme derive in whole or in part from their, or some other person's, participation in an occupational pension scheme as an employee of a relevant employer.

(5) Classes or descriptions of person may be prescribed whose membership of, or participation in, a new scheme is to be disregarded for the purpose of determining whether the new scheme satisfies the conditions in sub-paragraph (3) or (4) above.

(6) The power to give a guarantee under sub-paragraph (1)(b) above becomes exercisable in the case of any new scheme if the Secretary of State is of the opinion that it is desirable to give such a guarantee for the purpose of ensuring that the trustees of the scheme are, or will be, able to meet their liabilities to make payments in respect of pension rights under the scheme as those liabilities fall to be met.

(7) The Secretary of State shall consider any representations made by the trustees of a new scheme which satisfies the conditions in sub-paragraph (4) above concerning their ability to meet their liabilities to make payments in respect of pension rights under the scheme.

(8) Any guarantee under this paragraph shall be given in such manner, and on such terms and conditions, as the Secretary of State thinks fit; and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions of this sub-paragraph, the terms and conditions on which a guarantee under this paragraph may be given include terms and conditions—

(a) with respect to any matter relating to payment under the guarantee, including—

(i) the circumstances in which payment under the guarantee falls to be made;

(ii) the amounts, or the method of determining the amounts, of any payments that fall to be so made;

(iii) the persons to whom any such payments are to be made;

(b) with respect to any matter relating to the management, affairs or winding up of the scheme, including—

(i) the policy to be followed in relation to the investment of assets held for the purposes of the scheme; and

(ii) the distribution of any surplus which may arise under the scheme; or

(c) requiring or precluding, or otherwise with respect to, amendment of the rules of the scheme;

and the sub-paragraphs of paragraphs (a) and (b) above are without prejudice to the generality of the preceding provisions of the paragraph in question.

(9) Any sums required by the Secretary of State to fulfil a guarantee given under this section shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament.

(10) In this paragraph—

"closed scheme" means a pension scheme—

(a) to which no new members are to be admitted; but

(b) under which pensions and other benefits continue to be provided;

"deferred pensioner", in the case of any pension scheme, means a person who has pension rights under the scheme but who (so far as relating to those pension rights) is neither a participant in the scheme nor a pensioner under the scheme;

"relevant employer" means—

(a) the Board;

(b) a wholly owned subsidiary of the Board; or

(c) a publicly owned railway company, other than a company which is wholly owned by the Franchising Director.")

Amendment proposed to the Lords amendment: (b), in line 49, leave out 'thinks' and insert 'may, after consultation with the trustees of, and the actuary to, the scheme in question, think'.—*[Mr. MacGregor.]*

Question put, That the amendment to the Lords amendment be made:—

The House divided: Ayes 323, Noes 100.

Division No. 386] **[12.40 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'lre)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Heniry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*

Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. James Arbuthnot and
Mr. Michael Brown.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bennett, Andrew F.
Betts, Clive
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Cann, Jamie
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Etherington, Bill
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Graham, Thomas
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harvey, Nick
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Home Robertson, John
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Livingstone, Ken
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McWilliam, John
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morley, Elliot
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
Oiner, William
Parry, Robert
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Purchase, Ken
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steinberg, Gerry
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Wareing, Robert N
Welsh, Andrew
Wigley, Dafydd
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Terry Lewis and
Mr. Alan Simpson.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment, as amended.

The House divided: Ayes 283, Noes 86.

Division No. 387] **[12.53 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul

Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcl)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Crain, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Howarth, Alan *(Stra'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'ter V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Robert Hughes and
Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Cann, Jamie
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Davidson, Ian
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Etherington, Bill
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Graham, Thomas
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Home Robertson, John
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John

McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McMaster, Gordon
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
Oiner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Parry, Robert
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Purchase, Ken
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Wareing, Robert N
Welsh, Andrew
Wigley, Dafydd
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Andrew Bennett and
Dr. John Marek.

Question accordingly agreed to. [Special Entry.]

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the remaining amendments involving privilege:—

The House divided: Ayes 270, Noes 82.

Division No. 388] **[1.06 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann

Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Andrew Mitchell and
Mr. Andrew Mackay.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Cann, Jamie
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clelland, David
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cummings, John
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Etherington, Bill
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Graham, Thomas
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hall, Mike
Harvey, Nick
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Home Robertson, John
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Lewis, Terry
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McMaster, Gordon
McWilliam, John
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
Oiner, William
Parry, Robert
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Purchase, Ken
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Simpson, Alan
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Wareing, Robert N
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Bob Cryer and
Mr. Dennis Skinner.

Question accordingly agreed to. [Special Entry.]

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the remaining amendments *[Queen's and Prince of Wales's consent signified to amendment No. 309]:—*

The House divided: Ayes 264, Noes 77.

Division No. 389] **[1.19 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Begg, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela

Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Andrew MacKay.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Cann, Jamie
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clelland, David
Coffey, Ann
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Davidson, Ian
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge Hl)*
Dixon, Don
Etherington, Bill
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Golding, Mrs Llin
Graham, Thomas
Grocott, Bruce
Hall, Mike
Harvey, Nick
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Home Robertson, John
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Lewis, Terry
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McMaster, Gordon
McWilliam, John
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
Oiner, William
Parry, Robert
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Purchase, Ken
Randel, David
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Wareing, Robert N
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Dr. Norman A. Godman and
Mr. Michael Connarty.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Motion made, and Question,

That a Committee be appointed to draw up reasons to be assigned to the Lords for disagreeing to certain of their amendments: Mr. Michael Brown, Mr. Roger Freeman, Mr. John MacGregor, Mr. Alan Meale, Mr. John Prescott; that three be the quorum; that the Committee do withdraw immediately.—*[Mr. MacGregor.]*

put forthwith pursuant to the Order [2 November]:—

The House divided: Ayes 260, Noes 75.

Division No. 390] **[1.31 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael

Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Andrew Mackay and
Mr. Andrew Mitchell.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Cann, Jamie
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clelland, David
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Graham, Thomas
Grocott, Bruce
Hall, Mike
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Home Robertson, John
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Lewis, Terry
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
McMaster, Gordon
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Purchase, Ken
Rendel, David
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Wareing, Robert N
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Bill Etherington and
Dr. John Marek.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Pitsea Post Office, Basildon

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Kirkhope.]*

1.43 am

Mr. David Amess (Basildon): On the face of it, my debate would appear to be a straightforward Adjournment debate in which I could complain about the closure of Pitsea post office and its transfer to a Tesco superstore, but it is not—it is Basildon's Watergate. I was greatly looking forward to the summer recess, which was to provide me with an opportunity to spend more time with my wife and family. I had no idea of the political furore there was to be throughout the months of August and September. In the time that we have to debate the matter, I shall be revealing correspondence that I have had with the Post Office and Tesco of a most unsatisfactory nature.

Most Members of Parliament are conscientious about their duties and they want to know what is going on in the area that they represent. One can imagine my outrage when I first learned from an article in a newspaper that Pitsea Crown post office was to close. I had had no notification from Post Office Counters Ltd., and I raised the matter first on the occasion of the summer Adjournment debate.

I referred to Basildon's Watergate. When the chairman of Post Office Counters Ltd. and his staff came to see me in my office in the House of Commons, he brought to my notice a letter which purported to have come from me supporting the closure of Pitsea post office. It was clear that the signature on the letter was not mine and never on any occasion had I authorised the letter sanctioning any enthusiasm for the closure of Pitsea post office.

To get to the heart of the matter, however, I have no quarrel with the Government. I support all current Post Office initiatives whereby different retail outlets for post offices have been selected. But in my constituency I am always mindful of the overall trading position. Far too many people are coming to the town of Basildon, which I represent, and opening an ever-increasing number of larger stores. At this moment, the constituency is over-trading —I have no doubt about that. By 1 January, I will be the only Member of Parliament to have three Tesco superstores. Tesco thought that I would welcome it having its first post office in its store in my constituency.

The three-week consultation period was an absolute fiasco. The Conservative-controlled district council, the Conservative Member of Parliament when he learned about the closure, my constituents at public meetings and the excellent chairman of Post Office consultative committee all opposed the closure of Pitsea post office. But as events revealed, the Post Office had made up its mind. It clearly was working closely with Tesco from the outset. The change would not have inconvenienced a great many of my constituents, but I was concerned about the senior citizens in my constituency and it was to them that I listened. They saw the post office as a social place at which to meet and chat with the excellent people serving behind the counter.

The crazy thing is that the Tesco superstore is a quarter of a mile away from Pitsea post office. The senior citizens, some of whom are disabled and find great difficulty in getting about, did not want to travel the extra quarter of a mile to the Tesco superstore. Those are the people to whom I was listening. At the old site of the post office is a Sainsbury store. However, at this moment Sainsbury does not want post offices in its stores. It was not interested in the measure. At no point during the three-week consultation period did anyone from the Post Office come forward, meet my constituents' objections and say that they would, at the very least, consider one of the newsagents within the precinct having a post office facility.

After the meeting in my office at which the chairman of Post Office Counters mentioned my letter, the chairman understood perfectly well that I had no intention of authorising the letter, and that was the last we ever heard of it.

Unfortunately, on the day on which the Post Office announced that it was minded to go ahead with transferring to Tesco superstores, all the main protagonists bar me were unavailable. They were either on holiday or just not available. So I, the person who had opposed the proposal and supported my constituents from the start, was left to face the flack. I was so angry that I got in my car and drove to see the chairman of the Post Office at 148 Old street. Of course, he was not there. There was no one in a senior position to see me.

I also tried to make contact with Tesco. Again, there was no one available to see me. The chairman of Tesco wrote a letter to me on 9 August, in which he said:

"I acknowledge your letter of the 3rd August and I have spoken this morning to my colleague David Wild who I know has been in contact with you personally, and also your office. Mr. Wild informs me that he will be in further discussions with you this week, and I sincerely hope that we can resolve this situation to our mutual benefit."

All along, Tesco understood that I wanted to meet its representatives before the decision was announced. The decision was announced on the Monday and was leaked to the media the Friday before. That was a great discourtesy to my constituents. The supposed meeting with Tesco was on the following Thursday. So to date there has been no meeting between myself and Tesco.

On the day of the announcement that Post Office Counters intended to go ahead with moving Pitsea post office to Tesco superstores, my letter was mysteriously leaked to the media. It found its way on to television and was on the front page of my evening paper. That action was unforgivable.

The chairman of the Post Office said:

"Having returned from leave I was somewhat horrified to read of the developments that have taken place over the last few weeks in relation to the Pitsea Post Office situation. I have satisfied myself that the consultation process has been followed carefully and that the final decision is the correct one . . . It has been clear to us for some weeks that you passionately oppose the move of the Pitsea Post Office to the Tesco site and you have done your very best to influence the course of events.

We have tried to discover how a copy of the letter came into the hands of the Press and we have failed. Certainly it did not come from any person in authority in the Post Office but further than that we cannot say. However I feel strongly that the decision to subsequently make the letter available to the TV station, whether under pressure or not, was unprofessional, very unhelpful and I unreservedly apologise that this should have happened."

Fine. I accept the apology of the chairman of the Post Office. However, a lot of damage was done to me locally by the leak. It is not good enough for the Post Office to say that it cannot find out who the person or individuals are who leaked the letter.

So I wrote again, asking the chairman of the Post Office if he had any success in finding out who had leaked the letter. It could clearly be sorted out by a conversation between the editor of the *Evening Echo* and the chairman

[Mr. David Amess]

of the Post Office. After all, the editor of the *Evening Echo* knows the source of the leaked letter. But that has never happened.

I am further annoyed by the last letter that I received from the chairman of the Post Office. As the consultation period developed, I asked a number of questions. Where was the support for the closure of Pitsea post office and its removal to the Tesco superstore? I wanted to know how many letters, what were the organisations supporting the move and what surveys had been conducted. I have had no answer on any of those points. All along, I was concerned that the requirements of the senior citizens who did not want to collect their pensions from the new post office were satisfied.

The chairman of the Post Office told me in his last letter that only six people have decided not to transfer their pensions. I have been in contact with the Department of Social Security, which told me that 24 people decided to change their method of collection, and will be getting their pensions from Rectory road in Pitsea, but more than 600 people in the constituency are collecting their pensions through the banks and direct debit. I make no criticism of that, but all along the contention from the Post Office was that the change would make no difference.

It is appalling that those senior citizens who enjoyed going to the Pitsea post office and talking to the counter assistants, who helped with all their queries, have been completely forgotten. All that I get from Tesco is the ridiculous argument that it finds that, whenever it takes over a post office, there is always an outcry, petitions are signed, all sorts of people oppose the move, but after a few weeks things settle down and people have no objections, and that it has asked its customers about the move.

What a silly proposition that is. Of course the customers of Tesco will be delighted to have a post office facility so that they can get their car tax disk and purchase their stamps and television licences. That was never the argument. If one asks a silly question, one gets a silly answer. Of course they will say that they are happy. I am concerned about the people who do not go there. How will their reaction be monitored? It seems as though they have been forgotten, and nobody could care less: we had a bit of a row, now we have got our way, and they are forgotten.

I am not going to forget those people and the way that the consultation was held. As was known full well, the House was about to adjourn for the summer recess and I would not have an opportunity, such as I am delighted to have this morning, to debate the matter with my hon. Friend the Minister who has responsibility for such matters. The way the consultation was carried out meant that the decision was a fair accompli from the start.

Will my hon. Friend reflect on my points? I draw to his attention my feeling that it was cruel for the Post Office to go ahead with the proposal without allowing my senior citizens an opportunity to continue to collect their pensions from their local post office. Although many of us would say that it is best to collect them direct from a bank or savings deposit, that is not what they want. It was also greedy to give it all to one outlet.

It would not have taken much to have come to an arrangement. I understand that Martin The Newsagent in Pitsea centre would have been happy to have a post office there. That is the least that the post office should have done —and it should do so now.

It is rumoured that Laindon post office may transfer to the third Tesco superstore, which is to open in Basildon on 1 January. We are told in one breath that we cannot have a post office within less than a mile; yet the post office in the Tesco superstore is less than a mile away from a post office in Vange. If it moved from its present site, it would be about two and half miles away, so will my hon. Friend the Minister look into that matter, too?

What was appalling about Tesco's behaviour was that it kept stonewalling and saying that it was a matter for the post office. That was nonsense; Tesco wanted the business. The very next week, Tesco's manager had the nerve to write to me about Sunday trading and said that I should listen to my constituents on that matter. I have it on good authority that my reply was stuck on the notice board. That is unprofessional. If a manager intends to put a Member of Parliament's letter on the notice board, he should give due warning.

I am not prepared to forget the conduct of the post office and Tesco over that matter, nor the importance of the post office within that shopping centre. I shall not simply put up my hand and support all big stores. As a Conservative, I am worried about the viability of small and medium-sized traders, whom we should not abandon. Neither am I prepared to forget the senior citizens who did not wish to transfer their pensions to Tesco superstore.

I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister will reflect on Basildon's Watergate—this whole unhappy, unsatisfactory dialogue between myself and the post office—and I hope that he will ensure, through his good endeavours, that it never happens to any hon. Member again.

2.3 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Technology (Mr. Patrick McLoughlin): My hon. Friend the Member for Basildon (Mr. Amess) is renowned as a champion for the rights of his constituents and ensuring that they get a full hearing both through his representations to various people and in the House.

The future of Pitsea post office has generated much interest and concern among my hon. Friend's constituents. However, it is important that we consider it in a wider context.

I fully recognise and share my hon. Friend's concern about the leaking of a letter to the local newspaper. As he said, he has received a reply from the chairman of the post office, who has expressed his regret that that should have occurred and his unreserved apologies for the aggravation caused. The post office has investigated thoroughly how the letter came into the media's hands, but has been unable to reach a sound conclusion. If it could be proved that a post office employee had been responsible for such an unauthorised action, it would be regarded as serious professional misconduct and acted on accordingly.

My hon. Friend mentioned Tesco and Sunday trading. He will forgive me if I do not go down that avenue, as I am led to believe that the House will have an opportunity to discuss that matter later.

Post Office Counters Lid. operates Europe's largest retail network, serving some 28 million customers each week through almost 20,000 outlets. Currently, those comprise 881 main or Crown post offices and some 19,000

agency offices, ranging from large franchise offices in supermarkets, open for six full days a week, to community offices in rural areas that are open for just a few hours a week.

The sheer size and diversity of the Post Office network means that decisions about the location and organisation of individual post offices must be an operational matter for the Post Office management and not for the Government. The Government have, of course, an interest in the broad framework of the provision of post offices, in line with our clear manifesto commitment to maintain a nationwide network of post offices. However, if that network is to continue to be viable, it is essential that the Post Office Counters business is run as effectively as possible and in the interests of all its consumers.

It is in that context that Post Office Counters' programme to convert Crown post offices to agency offices must be considered. Within the nationwide network, a large number of rural post offices are run at a loss to Post Office Counters Ltd. To continue to maintain those offices as well as to fund extensive modernisation and customer service improvements, the Post Office must find ways of increasing the efficiency of its operators.

As a commercial concern with nation-wide responsibilities, the Post Office is not, and cannot be, immune to a wide range of economic changes and pressures. Its decisions must be taken against the key objectives of service and cost. Conversion of Crown offices to agency-operated outlets provides an opportunity significantly to reduce the cost of running an individual office through, for example, shared overheads. Frequently, it also means that the accommodation and facilities can be upgrade and longer opening hours can be provided on a cost-efficient basis.

Under the Crown conversion programme, since 1988 more than 600 Crown post offices have been converted to agency offices, and 90 of those conversions have been to franchise offices in partnership with supermarket chains and other retailers. In every case, the agency office has continued to offer the full range of services which had been provided at the Crown offices that it replaced. There has been no downgrading of the service, and agency office staff are fully trained by Post Office Counters to the same standard as its own staff.

In view of the cost savings that the conversion of Crown post offices to agency status is delivering, Post Office Counters plans to continue with the programme as suitable opportunities arise. Where such an opportunity is identified, the Post Office will always consult publicly on individual proposals in accordance with a code of practice agreed with the Post Office Users National Council.

The code provides that whenever plans to convert a Crown office to an agency operation are being formulated, the district manager advises the local Member of Parliament and a range of representative bodies of the proposals. At local level, these include the district council, the county or regional council, the parish and rural community council, and where appropriate, the local Post Office advisory committee and the local chamber of commerce.

The Post Office Users National Council is also advised, but, rightly, the emphasis is on seeking local views and comments within a stipulated period. The period is generally one month, but I understand that it is frequently extended by a further week or two when extra time is needed to obtain and submit local comments.

It has to be recognised, however, that the Post Office looks to the public consultation process to identify any special local circumstances which may have been overlooked in formulating its conversion proposal. If this is the case, plans are modified accordingly. However, it is not putting its proposal to a local vote, as is sometimes presumed. In general, in the Post Office's experience, there tends to be a natural and understandable opposition to any change in what is widely regarded as a traditional institution.

There is a curiously common pattern with these conversions. Proposals which are initially seen as unwelcome and detrimental to service levels and convenience are, once the change has been made, quickly seen to have positive benefits. Independent research has been undertaken into customer reaction to 21 conversions that have taken place in the past two years. That research is conducted on seven criteria—convenience, accessibility, waiting time, speed of handling transactions, staff attitude, staff welcome and convenience of opening hours. For the first six of those criteria, the research showed that for each customer who considers that service has deteriorated, five consider that it has improved and a further five perceive no change.

On opening hours, 67 per cent. of the customers questioned consider them to be better than before, 32 per cent. consider them to be about the same and a mere 1 per cent. consider them worse. That is a consistent pattern which provides a convincing endorsement of the conversion programme and the high levels of service provided by our franchise post offices.

My hon. Friend has forcefully made his views clear about the consultation process in the case of the Pitsea post office. His view results largely from widespread misinterpretation of the essential nature of the consultation process. As I said earlier, it is not intended to be a popular vote, but a means of identifying any factors and concerns which the Post Office has not fully appreciated in drawing up its plans.

In the case of Pitsea, I understand that specific concerns raised during the consultation process relating to better lighting, clearance of overgrown shrubbery on the pathway approach and the provision of more disabled parking spaces have been jointly addresssed by the Post Office and Tesco in the final arrangements for the franchise operation with the opening of the new facility on 11 October. Post office services are now offered for 79 hours a week, compared with 46 hours a week under previous arrangements—a facility which I hope will provide an increased service to a number of my hon. Friend's constituents.

My hon. Friend also asked me about the case of Laindon Crown post office. He has reported to me the speculation about the future of this post office in wake of the changes at Pitsea. Post Office Counters has confirmed that, contrary to reports of a relocation to a new Tesco store at Dunton, the post office facility in Laindon will remain on the present site for the foreseeable future.

In conclusion, I repeat that the decision to convert individual Crown post offices to agency status are the operational responsibility of Post Office Counters. The Government, however, fully support the Crown conversion programme for the important contribution that it makes towards reducing the business overheads in the interests of taxpayers and the Post Office's clients and customers.

[Mr. Patrick McLoughlin]

Franchise offices and sub-post offices are generally more efficient than the directly run Crown post offices, but the financial benefits are not being achieved at the expense of quality to the public. Service provisions and standards remain the same or better and, after some initial reluctance of customers to face the change, within a short period the new arrangements are almost universally accepted as providing a worthwhile and positive benefit. I see no reason why that should not be the case at Pitsea.

I believe that residents can confidently look forward to continuing provision of excellent post office facilities in the town. However, I would be wholly wrong to say to my hon. Friend that I do not recognise the serious strength of feeling that he has expressed here tonight in the Chamber and I will certainly draw it to the attention of both the chief executive and the chairman of the Post Office in the hope that my hon. Friend will receive a better response to any future dealings he may have on the matter than he has in the past.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at thirteen minutes past Two o'clock.

House of Commons

Wednesday 3 November 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRIVATE BUSINESS

BRITISH WATERWAYS BILL *[Lords]*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

That the Promoters of the British Waterways Bill *[Lords]* shall have leave to suspend proceedings thereon in order to proceed with the Bill, if they think fit, in the next Session of Parliament, provided that the Agents for the Bill give notice to the Clerks in the Private Bill Office not later than the day before the close of the present Session of their intention to suspend further proceedings and that all Fees due on the Bill up to that date be paid;

That, if the Bill is brought from the Lords in the next Session, the Agent for the Bill shall deposit in the Private Bill Office a declaration signed by him, stating that the Bill is the same, in every respect, as the Bill which was brought from the Lords in the present Session;

That, as soon as a certificate by one of the Clerks in the Private Bill Office, that such a declaration has been so deposited, has been laid upon the Table of the House, the Bill shall be read the first and second time and committed (and shall be recorded in the Journal of this House as having been so read and committed);

That all Petitions relating to the Bill presented in the present Session which stand referred to the Committee on the Bill, together with any minutes of evidence taken before the Committee on the Bill, shall stand referred to the Committee on the Bill in the next Session;

That no Petitioners shall be heard before the Committee on the Bill, unless their Petition has been presented within the time limited within the present Session or deposited pursuant to paragraph *(b)* of Standing Order 126 relating to Private Business;

That, in relation to the Bill, Standing Order 127 relating to Private Business shall have effect as if the words "under Standing Order 126 (Reference to committee of petitions against Bill)" were omitted;

That no further Fees shall be charged in respect of any proceedings on the Bill in respect of which Fees have already been incurred during the present Session;

That these Orders be Standing Orders of the House.—*[The Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means.]*

Hon. Members: Object.

Oral Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

South Africa

1. **Mr. Burns:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures he is taking to assist the democratisation of South Africa.

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Douglas Hurd): Since the House rose for the summer, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has held talks with President de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, in which he restated our support for the transition to non-racial democracy in South Africa. I met Chief Buthelezi. We are discussing with our EC partners, the Commonwealth and the United Nations practical ways to help ensure free and fair elections in South Africa. The mandates of all the observer missions to which we contribute to help stem violence have been extended until next April's elections. Last year, we spent £11 million on direct aid to South Africa, and a similar amount via the EC programmes. We are funding more than 1,000 black South Africans on training courses here and in South Africa. I think that this is money well spent.

Mr. Burns: Will my right hon. Friend join me and, I am sure, all hon. Members in congratulating Nelson Mandela and President de Klerk on the award of their Nobel peace prize? Does he agree that in the difficult transitional period to a genuine multiracial and democratic society, the international community must give every assistance to help that process?

Will my right hon. Friend confirm that, if South Africa sought to rejoin the Commonwealth and it was felt that that would help assist South Africa in achieving its internal goals, the Government and the international community within the Commonwealth would agree to South Africa's rejoining?

Mr. Hurd: I agree with my hon. Friend about the award of the Nobel peace prize. The State President and Mr. Mandela have worked nobly together, and it is right that they should receive the award together.

I also agree with my hon. Friend's second point. It will be for South Africa when the time comes to decide whether she wishes to apply to rejoin the Commonwealth. We would certainly warmly welcome that. It would bring to a happy end a sad chapter in the history of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Robert Hughes: May I associate myself with the congratulations to President de Klerk and Nelson Mandela? May I also commend the Government for what they have done so far, especially in the Commonwealth communiqué which recognises the elections to be held in April 1994 as of historic significance?

May I also commend the Government for recognising that the process is still fragile, and that much needs to be done between now and April to ensure that the elections are seen to be free and fair? While the Commonwealth and EC are doing a lot, what new initiatives will the Foreign Secretary take within the United Nations to make sure that the maximum amount of money is made available before the election for the training of people in the election

process, and to make sure that the result when it comes is accepted by every party in the country as leading to a new democratic South Africa?

Mr. Hurd: The Government are not used to receiving praise from the hon. Gentleman on that subject, so I am grateful to him. I agree with him on his last point. I listed the things that we are doing. It is important that the April elections should be seen to be free and fair. We have a lot of experience in this country. That is available to the South Africans, and they know it.

Mr. Ian Taylor: My right hon. Friend knows how difficult it is to help the political parties to build up their own activities such as training and their understanding of the purpose of elections, particularly in the rural areas. In that context, will my right hon. Friend note the activities of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy? That all-party group was set up with Foreign Office funding, and it is trying to find ways to assist the democratic process in South Africa.

Mr. Hurd: My hon. Friend is quite right, and perhaps I should have mentioned that earlier. What the foundation is doing in South Africa is a sign that the House was wise to set it up on an all-party basis. I am anxious that good South African projects should come before the foundation which are worth considering and which can be approved. They should not be from just one group.

Mr. Simon Hughes: I also welcome all that the Government have done and the support for the foundation. On a specific point, does the Foreign Secretary believe that anything more can be done to try to ensure that Chief Buthelezi participates fully in the process between now and next April? He is a significant player in the South African game, and I hope that the Foreign Secretary agrees that no effort should be spared to ensure that he participates fully in the process before, during and after the elections.

Mr. Hurd: The hon. Gentleman is quite right; that is why we welcomed Chief Buthelezi here in September. We are saying to him, "You should rejoin the process", and we are saying to others, "Don't believe that he can safely be kept out." He is an important player, and he occasionally feels that he has been isolated. It is very important that he should rejoin the process.

Human Rights

2. **Mr. Madden:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he next intends to meet the Foreign Minister of Belgium to discuss international co-operation on human rights.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Douglas Hogg): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs meets the Belgian Foreign Minister regularly.

Mr. Madden: Is the Minister aware of the arrest on 18 October in Brussels of Mr. Amanullah Khan, the chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front? I thank the Minister's office for conveying a request from myself and other hon. Members to visit Mr. Khan in prison which, regrettably, the Belgian authorities have, to date, refused. May I urge Her Majesty's Government to press the Belgian authorities to release Mr. Khan, who was visiting Belgium on a valid visitor's visa issued by the Belgian authorities and doing his best to bring a peaceful solution to the Kashmir conflict?

Mr. Hogg: I am indeed aware of the arrest of Mr. Amanullah Khan. As the hon. Gentleman, I think, will know, he was arrested on the basis of an Interpol warrant. As to whether he should be released and whether there is the possibility of delivering him to India, those are matters for the Belgian Government.

Miss Emma Nicholson: When my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary meets the Belgian Foreign Minister, will he draw to his attention the profoundly important statement made by Prince Charles in Oxford last week in which he described the policy of Saddam Hussein towards the marshlands as "obscene lies"? May I congratulate the Minister on his statement contained in the film that was shown last week and urge him to support the work of Prince Charles by bringing to the UN Security Council the force and vigour that Prince Charles brought to Oxford and force the Security Council to implement the many resolutions it has passed, which at the moment are not worth the paper they are written on?

Mr. Hogg: As we are in the business of congratulating one another, may I congratulate my hon. Friend in this important respect? She has done more than anyone to draw the attention of the House and a wider public to what Saddam Hussein is doing in south Iraq with regard to the arabs in the marshes. That is a terrible business. The world community is alert to it, and that is due, in no small degree, to what my hon. Friend has done.

Mr. Kaufman: In his discussions on human rights, will the Minister take up the question of human rights in Jamaica, where, despite the welcome judgment of the Privy Council this week, many men are being held in appalling conditions on death row and where, for example, a prisoner called Lynden Champagnie, who has been on death row for 14 years since he was a teenager, has now been told after his sentence was commuted that he cannot be considered for parole for another 10 years? Is not the attitude of the Jamaican Government on that issue a disgrace and a scandal? Will the Government make that clear to the Jamaican Government?

Mr. Hogg: I certainly welcome the decision of the Privy Council. I have always thought that that type of question, particularly that of the death penalty, is essentially a matter for national Governments. I agree that one is entitled to have regard to the conditions in which people are held. I also agree that, when people are held too long on what is generally referred to as death row, it is an undesirable state of affairs. In general terms, whether or not there is a death penalty and whether it is carried out is a matter for national Governments.

Mr. Ward: Does my right and learned hon. Friend agree that the focal point in Europe for human rights is the Council of Europe? Will he do all he can to encourage it in its work on human rights, and encourage other nations to sign up to the various conventions?

Mr. Hogg: My hon. Friend has asked three questions to which there are three answers, each of which is yes.

Mr. Rogers: The Government have correctly refused to recognise Indonesia's illegal occupation of East Timor and

have supported the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. In view of the appalling human rights record of Indonesia, would it not be logical for the Government to extend their position and support the United Nations resolutions that proscribe the sale of arms to aggressor states, especially weapons that can be used for internal repression, and the diminution of human rights?

Mr. Hogg: We consider any applications to sell arms on a case-by-case basis. I suspect that the hon. Gentleman is referring to the contract to sell Hawk aircraft. If we had stood in the way of that contract, I suspect that the hon. Gentleman would have been the first to complain.

Middle East

3. **Mr. Hawkins:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what further contribution Her Majesty's Government intend to make to the progress of talks between middle eastern countries in the moves towards peace in that region.

Mr. Hurd: We shall continue acts of support for the peace talks, both politically through our contacts with the parties and economically.

Mr. Hawkins: I thank my right hon. Friend for that answer. Will he try to bring pressure to bear on the Arab countries to end the Arab boycott of trade with Israel when he has further talks with all the parties involved in the middle east peace process? Will my right hon. Friend also bear in mind, when considering the position of the various parties in that process, that the only democracy in the region is Israel and that there are great concerns about the position of some other countries on a variety of issues including Syria in particular? Does he agree that, while it is in our interest to promote peaceful talks between all the parties and encourage the development of the peace process, those concerns need to be recognised?

Mr. Hurd: I agree with my hon. Friend about the boycott. There has been some progress—if he listens to British firms he will know of the welcome announcement from the Government of Kuwait during the summer—but not yet enough, and we shall continue to urge more. We need a comprehensive settlement. The Israel-PLO accord is a dramatic breakthrough which the House has welcomed, and Israel and the PLO are trying to put it into practice.

There will not be comprehensive peace until there are agreements between Israel and Jordan, Israel and Syria, and Israel and Lebanon. While it is right that the sensitivities of Israeli democracy should be understood and respected—we always try to do that—equally, it is important that none of the three other tracks, with Jordan, with Syria and with the Lebanon, should be long neglected.

Mr. Ernie Ross: Does the Foreign Secretary understand that, if the accord signed by those two brave peoples is to work, the peace talks taking place in Taba must be assisted wherever they can be? Does he have any intention of raising with our European partners the possible attendance of a member of the troika to assist in that dialogue in Taba, which has unfortunately broken down?

Can he tell the House of any other initiatives that the European Parliament intends to take to ease the pressure in Gaza? Did the Minister of State take up the suggestion that my right hon. Friend the Member for Copeland (Dr. Cunningham) made at Brighton to invite Chairman Arafat to Britain to express his needs on behalf of the Palestinian people?

Mr. Hurd: I can point out what we are doing. I went to Syria not long ago in order to establish our credentials and our interests in that part. On Monday, in Brussels, Mr. Arafat will come at my suggestion and meet the European Foreign Affairs Council. I will be there. He will be coming to London in December. I think that there is a question on the Order Paper about that. I hope to go to Gaza, Israel and Jordan in the next recess. We British want to do our utmost to keep the process on the move and, where we can, give useful and practical support to do so.

Mr. John Marshall: Is my right hon. Friend aware that today the PLO has admitted that Ron Arad is still being held in captivity, seven years after he became a prisoner of war? *[Interruption.]* Is not that, as my hon. Friend says, quite disgraceful? Did my right hon. Friend raise that matter with the Syrians when he saw them? May we have an assurance that he will raise it with Arab leaders whenever he meets them?

Mr. Hurd: We have often raised that sad case with the Iranians, the Syrians and with any others who might be able to help. There is a multitude of tragedies arising out of wars and terrorist activities in recent years; Mr. Arad is certainly one of them, and he deserves our support.

Mr. Menzies Campbell: What weight do the Government presently attach to the Damascus declaration? What is the Foreign Secretary's assessment of the likelihood of persuading the states of the Gulf Co-operation Council to make better provision for their joint defence?

Mr. Hurd: I am all in favour of their making greater provision for their joint defence, and I never cease to urge that on them. The Damascus declaration envisages that they could receive help from Syria and Egypt in that. We support that idea. It is up to them to decide how to put it into practice.

Mr. Cyril D. Townsend: I warmly welcome my right hon. Friend's comments following his successful visit to Syria. Does he appreciate that many of us would like to see the United Kingdom taking a rather more prominent role in trying to support the peace process, which has been achieved with remarkable courage and vision on both sides? Will my right hon. Friend concentrate on the plight of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in particular? How does he see their future?

Mr. Hurd: We will try to take a more visible role. We have deliberately held back, as my hon. Friend knows, in recent years in order not to complicate what correctly seemed to us to be a genuine effort by the United States Administration to get things moving. Now we are in more open country, as it were, and I think that there is scope for more visible activity by ourselves, in support, as my hon. Friend said, of the peace process.

My hon. Friend is quite right about the refugees, not just in Lebanon but on the west bank and in Gaza. We are in the lead—£6 million a year—in supporting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. We shall see more of that in January. I am also very anxious that there should be an Israel-Lebanon accord which can enable a settling down on that particularly difficult part of Israel's border.

Dr. John Cunningham: I welcome the right hon. Gentleman's decision to invite Mr. Yasser Arafat to London for discussions. Is not it clear, though, that, based on many of the other comments—for example, the ending of the Arab boycott—the next key decision will be, if possible, and we hope that it will be possible, an agreement between Syria and Israel on the full guarantee of peace and security for Israel, contingent upon a full withdrawal by the Israelis from Syrian territory?

Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us a little more about his discussions with President Assad about those matters? Does he share our concern at the rather abrupt break-off of discussions in Taba this week, apparently because the Israelis are now saying that they do not intend to withdraw their military from Gaza but simply to redeploy them? Is not that rather a negation of what has been agreed?

Mr. Hurd: President Assad and Mr. Shara'a made it clear that they believed in "total withdrawal" and "total peace". Of course, what remains to be worked out is what each of those phrases means. That can be done only between the parties. There is talk in Israel of a need to digest the Israel-PLO accord—that is, to allow time to pass. I think that that is reasonable, provided that it does not go on for ever. That is the Syrian view, too. That is why it is important to stress that a comprehensive agreement includes Israel and Syria.

I should be disturbed if I thought that the Taba discussions had broken down. I believe that what has happened is that the PLO, and the Palestinians in particular, feel the need for a break in order to consult. There is no doubt about the obligations undertaken by Israel as regards military withdrawal. It has always been clear that they are rather difficult to turn into practical arrangements. It is important that that work should continue.

European Free Trade Association

4. **Mr. Bates:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress is being made in respect of the EFTA states joining the European Community.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. David Heathcoat-Amory): The European Council last week reaffirmed the 1 January 1995 target date for accession by the four applicants. Good progress is being made towards the object of completing the negotiations by 1 March next year.

Mr. Bates: Does my hon. Friend agree that the inclusion of the EFTA states will be welcome, because not only will they be much-needed and welcome net contributors to the EC budget, but they will be a powerful force for free trade, which will benefit and strengthen the entire Community?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Yes, we welcome the prospect of the four states acceding to the Community. They will be net contributors to the budget, so they will share our interest in enforcing budgetary discipline and controlling expenditure. Their instincts, too, are towards free trade and openness to the rest of the world. Therefore, they share our vision of the Community as one that is open and diverse.

Mr. Radice: What are the institutional implications of the accession of the EFTA countries to the EC?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: There will have to be some institutional adjustments to accept those four countries into the Community. That will be part of the discussions taking place between existing member states. But we wish to confine the debate to what is required by the prospect of enlargement and do not wish to reopen those institutional issues, which were essentially settled by the Maastricht treaty.

Mr. Channon: Will my hon. Friend tell us what Her Majesty's Government propose about the voting system to be used in the Community once the welcome accession of those countries takes place?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: One of the matters to be decided is how many votes to accord to each of the countries coming in and what will constitute a qualified majority vote. A number of ideas are being discussed, but no final resolution of that is yet in prospect.

Middle East

5. **Mr. Parry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to meet Chairman Arafat to discuss the middle east peace process; and if he will make a statement.

11. **Mr. Canavan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will arrange to meet representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organisation to discuss the middle east peace plan.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: As my right hon. Friend has just said, Chairman Arafat has been invited to visit Britain. The visit will take place in December. Precise dates will be announced nearer the time. In addition, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State hopes to meet him in Brussels with other EC Foreign Ministers on 8 November.

Mr. Parry: I understand that when Mr. Arafat comes to London, he is expecting to meet both the Labour party and Conservative party on middle east councils. The Prime Minister has replied to me that he expects to meet Mr. Arafat. This historic visit can only mean peace, both in Israel and Palestine.

Mr. Hogg: Mr. Arafat will be a welcome visitor to London. It is certainly true that the Prime Minister hopes to see him. I was not aware of the two other meetings that the hon. Gentleman has mentioned, but it sounds like a jolly good idea to me.

Mr. Canavan: In view of yesterday's suspension of talks between the Palestinians and Israelis, due apparently to the Israelis' insistence on a mere redeployment of their troops rather than a complete withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, will the British Government use their influence within the international community to try to ensure that the Israeli Government stand by their commitment for complete withdrawal, as contained in the 13 September agreement?

Mr. Hogg: Both parties are, of course, negotiating at the moment. I am not unduly depressed by what has happened; I regard it as a suspension rather than anything else. The hon. Gentleman is quite right in the sense that both parties must stand by their commitments, must show

flexibility and must ensure that the momentum is maintained if public opinion in the occupied territories and in Israel itself is to continue to support the peace process.

Sir Ivan Lawrence: When my right hon. and learned Friend meets Mr. Arafat or any other Arab leaders, will he point out that if the Arab nations are genuine in their pursuit of the peace process, the immediate release of Ron Arad and the immediate ending of the iniquitous Arab boycott will do more than anything to build confidence in the process? Will he urge those conclusions on them?

Mr. Douglas Hogg: I think that it is important that everyone who is now party to the negotiations recognises the need to carry the opinion in the opposite camp. That means that the Arabs and the Palestinians must stop the violence, relax the boycott and show that there are positive benefits to Israel from the courageous steps that it has taken.

It also means that the state of Israel must release detainees, allow travel to, through and from Jerusalem, stop settlement and allow people from the territories to work in Israel. There must be a clear benefit to everyone in Israel and the territories as a consequence of what has been agreed; otherwise, there is a real risk that the agreement will not be underpinned by public support.

Mr. Batiste: I agree with what my right hon. and learned Friend has just said. He is aware that the Israeli Government places a high premium on the ending of the secondary and tertiary boycott of Israel as part of the peace process. What evidence has he seen that the PLO, under the leadership of Mr. Yasser Arafat, is prepared to encourage its Arab friends to withdraw from that boycott?

Mr. Douglas Hogg: There is already encouraging evidence of a move away from the boycott, especially with regard to the secondary and tertiary boycott. But I want to be even-handed about this. It is important that there is movement from both sides in the negotiations. That means movement from the Palestinians and movement from the Arab states. It also means movement from the Israeli side. In answer to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton (Sir I. Lawrence), I indicated the sort of movement that we are looking for.

Angola

6. **Mr. Robert Ainsworth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what initiatives he plans regarding the situation in Angola; and if he will make a statement.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Mark Lennox-Boyd): On 1 November, the United Nations Security Council reaffirmed its support for UN efforts to achieve a settlement in Angola through negotiations and its willingness, as necessary, to impose further sanctions against UNITA.

Mr. Ainsworth: Is there any justification for the continued delay in the implementation of full sanctions against the UNITA forces? We have now delayed so many times that we are in danger of losing all credibility. First, there was a delay until 1 July, then September, then another 10 days and then 1 November, and now it seems that there will be an indefinite delay. Can the hon. Gentleman tell the House what progress has been made in spending the £5 million of emergency aid that the Government promised to the Angolan people, and whether he is prepared to give a commitment of further support in the light of the appalling conditions faced by the 70 per cent. of the population who live in the Government-controlled parts of the country?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The hon. Member is aware that there have been discussions in Lusaka last week between the MPLA and UNITA. It is my belief that UNITA attended those talks as a result of the United Nations sanctions that have been imposed so far. It has been made clear by all the parties to those sanctions and by the United Nations that if further sanctions are necessary to bring pressure to bear on UNITA, that will be done. The fact is that some progress has been achieved so far in bringing UNITA to the table. That is the right position to be in.

As to the further aid of some £7 million announced recently, we are concentrating on the most effective use of that aid. However, it is too early to give a definite explanation of what we shall be doing.

Mr. Colvin: Will my hon. Friend confirm that under United Nations Security Council, resolution 864, phase 2 of the sanctions against UNITA will be imposed only if there are no further talks? Will he confirm that UNITA has now said that, notwithstanding some reported irregularities, it accepts the outcome of the elections two years ago and is prepared to sit down unconditionally and talk to the MPLA and other parties in Angola? Is that not the best way forward towards bringing peace to that tragically stricken country from the bloody civil war that is going on at present?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: My hon. Friend is right: UNITA has said what he described in similar terms, but its words must be followed by actions. That is the important point to recognise. As I have said, there were discussions last week. Clearly, it would be inappropriate to take any further action at this stage. We hope that those discussions will continue in Lusaka and that there will be a fruitful outcome.

Mr. Worthington: The whole House will have been appalled at the pictures shown of the situation in Angola, which Mr. John Simpson described as the worst he had ever seen. What are we doing with our partners in the European Community to reopen this window of opportunity for humanitarian aid, not just in the stricken town of Kuito, but elsewhere? What are we doing with our partners to redouble diplomatic initiatives to bring the war to an end? I am asking not about the words that we are uttering but about the action that we are taking in the United Nations and the European Community.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I thought that I had described some action. We were active in getting United Nations Security Council resolution 864, which brought pressure to bear and led to last week's discussions, as I described in my two previous answers. That is what is continuing on the diplomatic side. We have been praised by everyone for the help that we have given on the humanitarian aid side. We have been quick to respond with relief flights to the opening up of besieged cities. We have been praised by the United Nations, the media and, I believe, John Simpson for our rapid response.

Mr. Wilshire: As one of four Members of this House who were election observers in Angola, I got to know

ordinary people as well as politicians. Does my hon. Friend agree that what is happening in Angola now is a total obscenity which demands more than negotiations and more than sanctions? Compared with the obscenity of 1,000 people a day being slaughtered and others maimed, and the level of starvation of youngsters there, Bosnia—dare I say it—seems but a tragic sideshow. Will my hon. Friend therefore use his best endeavours to persuade our colleagues in the EC and the United Nations to put this obscenity behind the world and do something effective about it?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: My hon. Friend is absolutely right to describe the situation as he has. I think that, on a fair analysis, he will agree with me that Britain has played a leading part in bringing about last week's negotiations. The problem will have to be addressed by the parties to the problem in Angola. We have brought pressure to bear in the United Nations through resolutions which we have sponsored actively to bring UNITA to the table. There have been discussions. We have made it clear that we shall be happy to support further, more demanding resolutions than sanctions if that is necessary. Meanwhile, we have responded enormously swiftly and successfully on the humanitarian front.

Belize

7. **Mr. Gunnell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what further consideration has been given to United Kingdom relations with Belize.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: We continue to develop our already good relations with Belize. In October, the Belizean Prime Minister, Mr. Esquivel, met my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in Limassol and met other Ministers in London.

Mr. Gunnell: Given the August statement of the Guatemalan Vice President, in which he said that recognition of Belize was premature, and given that the new Belizean Prime Minister himself represents a rather nationalistic trend in the electorate, is the Minister confident about the stability of the relationship between Guatemala and Belize? Can he comment on what role this country can play in ensuring that stability? I am aware that the Queen is due to visit Belize early next year. Is that in part compensation for the withdrawal of British troops which is likely to have a bad effect on the economy and which many may see as a threat to their security?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Relations between Guatemala and Belize are not wholly satisfactory, but President de Leon Carpio of Guatemala has reaffirmed that his country recognises the sovereignty and independence of Belize. We have made it clear that if the situation deteriorates after the British garrison withdraws next year we stand ready to be consulted about an appropriate response.

Sir Nicholas Bonsor: My hon. Friend will be aware that I asked our hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Armed Forces what specific assurances we could give the Belizean Government about their security following the withdrawal of our troops. My hon. Friend must be well aware of the concern of the Belizean Government about their security. Will he consider carefully the positive steps that the United Kingdom Government can take to ensure that Guatemala is deterred from any intent that it might have in the future of invading Belize?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: I and other Ministers discussed the matter with Prime Minister Esquivel last month. We still have the garrison in Belize, and even when that is withdrawn there will still be a training base in Belize. In May, we issued a joint statement making it clear that if the situation deteriorates we shall stand ready to co-operate and co-ordinate our activities and draw up a likely response. At present, however, we do not judge the situation to be quite so serious as my hon. Friend fears.

Mr. Wareing: Does the Minister realise that the answer that he just gave on relations between Belize and Guatemala is different from those given by his predecessor, the right hon. Member for Watford (Mr. Garel-Jones), to me and to one or two of my colleagues only a few months ago? They we were told that everything was stable. Given that, even at that time, there was no agreement on the territorial waters dispute between the two countries, is it not premature to consider withdrawing British forces from Belize, where they give people confidence? Are the British Government about to do in Belize what they did when they withdrew the Endeavour from the Falkland Islands?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Belize became independent in 1981 and it was always envisaged that the British garrison might be removed, especially in the light of the 1991 recognition by Guatemala of the independence and sovereignty of Belize. That recognition has not been withdrawn. In answer to the previous question, I made clear our continuing concern and interest in the security of the region, and our continuing military involvement, albeit at a lower level.

Mr. Garel-Jones: As a general principle, dictatorships cause and start wars and democracies win them. Does my hon. Friend agree that events in Guatemala, following the removal of President Serrano, demonstrate the way in which central America, and indeed Latin America as a whole, has consolidated behind a democratic president in that republic?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The continuity of British foreign policy in Latin America is demonstrated by the fact that I entirely agree with what my right hon. Friend has just said.

European Foreign Policies

8. **Sir David Knox:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he proposes to have discussions with his European Community partners concerning the development of common European foreign policies.

Mr. Hurd: I meet our partners regularly to discuss the strengthening of intergovernmental co-operation on foreign policy.

Sir David Knox: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the development of common European Community foreign policies will be greatly facilitated by the Maastricht treaty, and that that will enable the Community, with the participation of Britain, to exert greater influence in the world?

Mr. Hurd: What happened at the summit on Friday illustrates my hon. Friend's point. There is no question of our being cajoled or out-voted, because of the treaty of Maastricht, into policies of which we disapprove. What happened, in an orderly way, was that the summit began to identify and tell the Foreign Ministers to pursue areas where it thought that they should act together. One example has already been given in the House: we shall help to monitor the elections in South Africa, to the extent that South Africans want us to. The same is true of the Russian elections next month: we suggested that there should be EC monitoring if the Russians want it, which they do. Another example is the contribution that we make towards implementing the peace process—getting Jericho and Gaza and the occupied territories into a better state to assume more responsibilities. Those are things which it makes sense for Europe to do together.

Mr. Barnes: How will we find out what Foreign Ministers are up to in the European Community, when the Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers has just decided that it is now possible to block the publication of votes that come out of their meetings? We are supposed to be in favour of openness. As a result of the Edinburgh summit of Heads of State it was agreed that those votes would be published so that we would know what was taking place: will the Minister guarantee that that situation will not be changed?

Mr. Hurd: There are no votes on those matters—they are of unanimity—and the hon. Gentleman will get his information in the same way as he has always got it: by making my life uncomforable in the House of Commons. One addition that is taking place was outlined by the Government in their recent memorandum to the House of Lords European Community Committee, in which we suggested that Ministers could offer briefings in both Houses on important common foreign and security policy issues. We are willing to do that in addition to arrangements that already exist on the Floor of the House and in Committee to cross examine Ministers and officials.

Mr. Cormack: Would it not be a splendid, if modest, start to the new post-Maastricht era if the nations of the Community could ensure that this winter the starving and suffering people of Sarajevo receive adequate aid and that no one is allowed to stop it getting through?

Mr. Hurd: It is best to do exactly that. As my hon. Friend knows, we have a strong record on that, both in the quality of aid that we are providing, particularly medicines, and in the efforts that our civilian drivers and troops are making to get the convoys through. The lines of communication through Serb-held territory now work reasonably well. The main problem arises partly from renewed shelling around Sarajevo, which has subsided, and fighting between Muslims and Croats in central Bosnia. I hope that the initiative that we took on Friday will enable David Owen and our local commanders to make it more possible to get that aid through. It is certainly a high priority.

Dr. John Cunningham: I welcome what the Secretary of State said about the practicability of the European Community acting together in foreign policy. That commends itself to everyone. But what evidence is there, from the weak and vague statement on the situation in Bosnia issued following the latest Council of Ministers, that any material change will take place in the circumstances which tragically prevail in Bosnia?

Although I emphatically support and praise the contribution of British troops in UNPROFOR, will the airlift to Sarajevo be stepped up as a result of last Friday's meeting? Will the finance for winter aid be increased as a result of that meeting? As a result of last Friday's discussions, will there be a serious attempt to halt, once and for all, Serbian and Croatian aggression in Bosnia? What practical difference have the discussions in Brussels made to the European Community's common approach to the problem in Bosnia?

Mr. Hurd: First, the Sarajevo airlift continues in full flight and at full intensity whenever it safely can and is extremely important, although most of the supplies reaching the area come from Belgrade by road through Serb areas. On the hon. Gentleman's second point, about total finance, we are in close touch with Mrs. Ogata. Our total contribution so far has been £51 million. The difficulty is not so much lack of resources as lack of access, which leads to the hon. Gentleman's third point.

In last Friday's discussions, I was anxious to avoid politicians in Brussels saying that, as from Friday afternoon, such and such a road is open and safe, when within 12 hours that could be contradicted. Rhetoric has been the enemy in this problem all the way through. What the United Nations needs is more troops. I hope that it may not be long before there are, for example, Malaysian troops in UNPROFOR, which would enable troops now in Bihac, for example, to be redeployed along the access roads. We are constantly urging and working for that. We are doing our bit in central Bosnia—the right hon. Gentleman was right about that—with the techniques at which our troops are good. The idea that we could get more aid through by using armed force is contradicted——

Dr. John Cunningham: I did not say that.

Mr. Hurd: No, but it is widely suggested—and it is contradicted by all the experts and evidence on the ground. We must work with the resources that we have and try to increase those resources, whether they are United Nations soldiers or money for the agencies. We are doing both.

Mr. Cash: In his discussions with Community partners who are members of the Christian Democratic party, will my right hon. Friend take the opportunity to repudiate any notion of majority voting in foreign policy matters, as laid down in the Athens declaration—the basic programme of the European People's party? Conservative Members will then be in no doubt that our party will have nothing to do with majority voting in relation to foreign policy, and specifically with regard to any actions connected with Bosnia, in line with the guidelines prescribed recently by the Council of Ministers.

Mr. Hurd: The position is perfectly clear in the Maastricht treaty. My hon. Friend, and other Conservative Members, may have contested the wisdom of the treaty, but he can now rely on its provisions in this regard with complete confidence.

Mr. Mandelson: Does the Foreign Secretary agree that the development of common European foreign policies requires the development of much greater public understanding of, and support for, those policies, not least

among young people? Is it not a backward move for the Foreign Office to propose cutting off its funding and support for a national organisation that is committed to those aims—the British Youth Council, with which, like the Secretary of State for Employment, I have been associated in the past? Will the Foreign Secretary reconsider the proposal, and stop it being implemented?

Mr. Hurd: The British Youth Council has done, and continues to do, admirable work. Given all the pressures on my budget, however, I must consider whether the Foreign Office should continue to support it, and how it ranks in relation to the other demands on my resources—scholarships, the British Council and the BBC world service, for instance. I have concluded that I cannot continue to support the British Youth Council with Foreign Office funds.

Eastern Europe

9. **Mr. Jenkin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with EC Commissioners and the Governments of the other member states about trade with and aid to the former communist countries of Europe.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Along with other Ministers, I discuss the issue regularly with other Community member states.

EC support, through the removal of trade barriers and through carefully targeted technical assistance, is vital to restore economic growth in those countries, and to consolidate their economic and political reforms.

Mr. Jenkin: Does my hon. Friend agree that, although the aid programmes for former communist countries in eastern Europe are very welcome, they are no substitute for free trade? What those countries really want is the removal of tariff and non-tariff restrictions from their goods so that they can access the markets of the European Community. Is not that the only way they will be able to rebuild their economies?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend. Trade is far superior to aid as an instrument to help social and political reforms in those countries. That is why the British Governments have been at the forefront of the calls for trade liberalisation.

We know that those newly free countries stand to gain most from being able to produce and sell their goods to the European Community. In exchange, that will provide additional opportunities for British and Community exporters.

Mr. Macdonald: One of the former communist countries most in need of aid is Bosnia. Will the Minister ask his right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary what he meant when he said that the airlift to Sarajevo was at full stretch? In the past month, only half the minimum survival ration that the United Nations has designated for the people of Sarajevo has been delivered. It is supposed to be 600gm of food per person per day, but has amounted to only 300gm.

The Berlin airlift lasted for fewer days but delivered 2 million tonnes of aid. The Sarajevo airlift has delivered only 60,000 tonnes. Is it not clear that much more can be done by means of the airlift, without risk to soldiers on land convoys, to deliver the minimum amount of aid that the United Nations has said is necessary for the people of Sarajevo?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The aid effort to the former Yugoslavia is fully stretched, taking into account the safety and danger constraints upon us, which I am sure the hon. Gentleman recognises. We are always seeking opportunities to improve the flow of aid and its security. The record of this country in financial terms is extremely good, because in overall terms we have contributed some £150 million to the former Yugoslavia, both through the European Community and through bilateral aid. Our record bears comparison with that of any of our allies.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: Have my hon. Friend and his Department made any assessment of the impact of the transfer of manufacturing capacity from the United Kingdom and other European Community countries to eastern European countries? What will be the impact of that on jobs in the EC countries, including our own?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: My hon. Friend perhaps regards free trade primarily as a threat. I regard it as an opportunity to build up the stability and prosperity of those countries, and to provide new markets for British exports. I remind my hon. Friend that the European Community currently has a large balance of payments surplus with those countries.

Ms Quin: Given the importance of trade, has the Minister studied the latest trade figures issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development which show, sadly, that the United Kingdom has fallen a long way behind not only Germany but Italy and France in the volume of trade that we conduct with the countries of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, particularly in exports? What will the Government do to ensure that the situation is treated with the urgency that it deserves, and that our trading relations with those countries are as close and as beneficial as possible in future?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: I welcome the hon. Lady to her position on the Labour Front Bench and I hope that she will remain there for a long time. Our export performance to central and eastern Europe must, indeed, be improved; that is why we believe in lowering trade barriers and liberalising trade. I am pleased to have the hon. Lady's support for that policy.

Japan

10. **Mr. Thomason:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the United Kingdom's relations with Japan.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Alastair Goodlad): Our relations with Japan are excellent. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister visited Japan from 18 to 21 September, where he held wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Hosokawa and other Ministers soon after they took office. He and the delegation of senior British business men who accompanied him, confirmed our positive approach to our trading relationship with Japan and stressed the continuing welcome for Japanese manufacturing investment in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Thomason: Does my right hon. Friend agree that continued inward investment from Japan is essential, particularly in areas such as the west midlands, and that it is enhanced by retaining and improving our existing diplomatic relations with Japan? Does he also agree that the Foreign Office has a vital role to play in enhancing and improving inward investment opportunities?

Mr. Goodlad: Yes. The British share of Japanese investment in the European Community during the financial year 1992-93 was more than 44 per cent. of the total. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department of Trade and Industry work very closely with the West Midlands development agency, both here and in Tokyo, to promote Japanese inward investment in the region. An inward investment mission from Japan, sponsored by the Invest in Britain Bureau, has visited the west midlands during the past fortnight. I hope that those investors will smile on Bromsgrove, in whose interests my hon. Friend is such a doughty fighter.

Mr. Cryer: Is not the inward investment from Japan only possible because of its enormous manufacturing success and the balance of payments surpluses that Japan enjoys with most other major manufacturing countries throughout the world? Will the Minister discuss with the Japanese how they achieve that, while we apparently cannot achieve it and are subordinated to the other countries of the Common Market so as to provide a large internal market for our manufacturing industry? Why should we be beholden to the Common Market when the example of Japan demonstrates that that is not necessary?

Mr. Goodlad: The House will be unsurprised to learn that the hon. Gentleman is wrong as usual. Exports from this country to Japan in the first part of this year were up by nearly 19 per cent. compared with last year's results, despite depressed levels of demand in Japan due to its current economic difficulties. The whole House, with the exception of the hon. Gentleman, will want to rejoice in that.

Mr. Viggers: Does my right hon. Friend agree that cultural and political links with Japan have never been stronger, and nor have our trade links? Does he agree that Japan has consistently placed more than 40 per cent. of its investment in the European union in the United Kingdom —and an even higher proportion in the United Kingdom financial sector? In his forthcoming visit to Japan, however, will my right hon. Friend urge on that country the fact that there are a number of invisible barriers to trade which, if removed or reduced, would enable us to improve our exports to the Japanese and thus help them to reduce their trade surplus?

Mr. Goodlad: Yes, indeed. As my hon. Friend knows —in his present capacity he makes a great contribution to our relations with Japan and is very knowledgeable about it—Japan has removed most barriers to trade in recent years, although there are still problems in some areas. The Prime Minister raised those matters during his recent visit and I shall do the same in my forthcoming one.

The Prime Minister of Japan described my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's visit as the beginning of a new era for British-Japanese relations, which he saw as the linchpin of Japan's relations with Europe. We will continue to seek to enhance that relationship and not, as some others do, to undermine it.

Ms Ann Coffey (Stockport): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order. We take points of order after statements.

Adoption (White Paper)

3.31 pm

The Secretary of State for Health (Mrs. Virginia Bottomley): With permission, I would like to make a statement about the Government's plans for the amendment of adoption law in England and Wales and for the development of adoption policy and practice. These plans are set out in a White Paper which I am publishing today. Copies are available in the Vote Office. The necessary legislation will be introduced as soon after the forthcoming Session as parliamentary time permits.

The White Paper builds on the recommendations of an interdepartmental working group, whose report was published last year, and subsequent consultation. We have also been influenced by the substantial body of research on adoption, a summary of which, prepared by my Department's social services inspectorate, has been placed in the Library of the House.

Adoption is about creating a loving and stable family upbringing which best provides for the child. The basic framework for adopting children remains sound. Given their fundamental importance to the life of the child, all adoptions will continue to be authorised by the courts, advised as appropriate by social services authorities or adoption agencies, which are in turn advised by adoption panels.

However, there is a need to bring the legislation up to date. The law in this field was last changed in 1975. Adoption today is very different from 20 years ago. The number of adoptions has more than halved in the intervening period. Fewer babies and toddlers are adopted, and a greater proportion of adoptions are of older children. Half of all adoptions today arise as a result of remarriage, when a step-parent wishes to establish a legal relationship with the natural child of his or her spouse. More people are interested in adopting children from abroad. The White Paper has been written against this background. It sets out a modern framework for adoption to take account of the way people live now.

The first duty in adoption must be to the child. There is a need to strengthen the law to take this fact more explicitly into account. Specifically, we propose to give children aged 10 or more the right to participate in their own adoption proceedings. They will have to agree before an adoption order can be made.

Where the birth parents oppose adoption, we propose a new and more explicit legal test for the courts. They must be positively satisfied that adoption offers significantly better prospects for the child than less permanent alternatives.

We shall reinforce the general preference of authorities and agencies for recommending married couples as adoptive parents. Above all, potential adoptive parents should be judged on the care, affection and stability they can offer the child.

There should be no place for ideology in adoption. We want common-sense judgments, not stereotyping. There are, for example, no good grounds for refusing on principle to contemplate trans-racial adoptions or adoption by parents over a prescribed age. Those basic points will be reinforced in guidance.

We intend new safeguards against the unacceptable handling of adoption cases. The White Paper describes a new complaints procedure for any party to an adoption case who is seriously dissatisfied.

Adoption is a service for children, not adults. Those offering to adopt, however, are entitled to fair, courteous and sensitive treatment. Statutory adoption agencies will remain responsible for deciding who to recommend as adoptive parents, but parents applying to adopt will have new opportunities for appeal and reassessment.

We also intend to consult on strengthening adoption panels to make them more broadly based. They will include more independent members and, wherever possible, one or more successful adoptive parent.

Where a step-parent adopts, we propose to end the anomaly that the birth parent in the new marriage is obliged to adopt his or her own child. Step-parents will still be able to adopt, but we intend to offer them and their spouses a new and simpler way of sharing legal responsibility for the child. They will be able to make and register with the courts a parental responsibility agreement. That will give them a joint responsibility for the child in the new marriage without severing the child's relationship with his other natural parent. The decision to enter such an agreement will not require professional assessment; it will be for families alone to decide.

We also propose a new guardianship order enabling other long-term carers and relatives, including foster parents, to define a more permanent legal relationship with children for whom they care. That would enable them to have their responsibility for the child's welfare recognised in law without going as far as full adoption.

Recent years have seen a steady growth in inter-country adoptions. That reflects both international events and the fact that, while the number of children available for domestic adoption has declined, the number of people wishing to adopt has not.

Those who want to adopt children from abroad should have their wishes respected. In all suitable cases, such adoptions should be facilitated. However, the procedures must be proper. They must prevent abuse. We must aim for the same high level of protection and benefits for the child as in domestic adoptions.

Earlier this year, the Government were represented in the preparation of a new Hague convention on inter-country adoption. Adoptions between countries which ratify the convention should become much simpler than at present without losing any safeguards.

In particular, there will be no need to duplicate adoption orders in both countries involved. Immigration clearance for the child will become an integral part of the adoption process. The United Kingdom will ratify the convention once Parliament has enacted the necessary legislation.

The Government believe that adoption continues to play a valuable part in our society. This is a view which is no doubt shared by the vast majority of the 750,000 people in Britain whom we estimate are adopted. Adoption provides children with a chance of a secure and loving unpbringing. The White Paper will strengthen a system which already has much to its credit. It is a White Paper for children, and a White Paper for families. I commend it to the House.

Mr. David Blunkett: First, I would like to thank the Secretary of State and her officials for the courtesy they

have shown me in ensuring that I could see the White Paper and the documents in time to be able to read them this afternoon.

Many issues of ideology divide the House, but the interests and the needs of children are not one of them. I pay tribute to all those who have contributed to the work on this White Paper and to adoptive and foster parents up and down the country.

Despite the briefing that took place with some newspapers and media outlets, the White Paper is sensible and welcome. Gone is the cash-register mentality of charging for adoption—although I ask the Secretary of State to examine the regulations on charging for inter-country adoption. Gone is the abuse of social workers. Instead, there is a welcome commitment to openness and to the development of what is described as a complaints procedure, although it might more accurately be described as a review.

Will the Secretary of State reflect, with us, on why she chose to pick out magistrates courts committees for nominating additional independent members of adoption panels, when we all agree that there should be a non-legalistic approach to ensuring the best possible consideration of adoptive parents and the needs of the children concerned?

Had we been involved, we might have been able to come up with a better title for the White Paper—perhaps the simple title, "Putting Children First". Does the right hon. Lady accept that we all have an interest in putting behind us any nonsense about political correctness and any prejudice in the application of the clear principle of ensuring that the interests of the child are at the forefront of our thinking? Does she agree that finding the right parents, or parent, for the right child is all that matters?

We could draw on the experience of my hon. Friend the Member for Eccles (Miss Lestor), who is sitting beside me on the Front Bench. She has made an admirable parent over many years. What matters is not age, status, weight, height or anything else—in saying that I imply no reflection on my hon. Friend, of course, Madam Speaker—but solely the needs of the child. What matters is not the isms or other factors that have been brought to public attention, but simply the right person to do the right job.

Will the Secretary of State say how, in approaching the International Year of the Family, we might join together in introducing measures that support, succour and encourage the family and stability, rather than undermining it? That could involve offering prospective adoptive parents counselling and support, including advice on infertility, so that they could also make choices within the NHS.

In a spirit of consensus—and without having a heart attack—will the Secretary of State accept my congratulations on the part that she has played in preparing the Hague convention, which is an important step towards protecting children and their parents throughout the world? Will she, with our European partners, seek to take clear and decisive steps to establish uniformity and proper standards right across the European Community for the entry of children, so that we can ensure that, whether they are from the war-torn regions of the world or from areas where standards are not so high, children are not abused by abduction and sale? Will she join other European member states in preventing the sale of children, which has recently been drawn to public attention in Greece, where four people were arrested in Athens last week for the abduction and sale of babies?

Will the Secretary of State join us in seeking to strengthen and widen the White Paper by reconsidering the training and retraining provided? Instead of narrowing and shortening training procedures, we could broaden them to take into account the proposed new powers and responsibilities.

May every child be wanted, may every child be protected and may every child be cared for. May we in the House, for once in our lives, avoid the simple adversarial approach to finding solutions and all play our part in securing the well-being of children for the future.

Mrs. Bottomley: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his constructive and positive approach to the White Paper. I share his sentiment that the well-being and welfare of children should unite political parties. There are difficult and complex issues to be addressed, but there is no reason for that to divide us.

The hon. Gentleman asked a number of questions. He asked about the independent members of the adoption panels; the magistrates committee was simply given as an example of one such group that might wish to nominate to those panels. We particularly wish to have those who have been successful adoptive parents themselves. It is an area where, with the best will in the world, theory and ideology can easily overtake common sense and practical judgments. We wish, wherever possible, to ensure that those practical principles are well founded throughout the adoption process.

The hon. Gentleman was right to pay tribute to all adoptive and foster parents in this country. We have a tradition of placing in families children with enormous individual needs. Many of the hard-to-place children in this country have a home with a family when, elsewhere, they would be confined to an institution. It is important that we build on that tradition of good practice.

The hon. Gentleman referred also to the International Year of the Family. We are all aware that many families are struggling, for a great range of reasons. The turbulence and change of modern society means that many families find themselves isolated and vulnerable. Finding ways of supporting parents and family formation in communities is something that we should all share.

The hon. Gentleman referred to other countries where child care practices do not meet the standards that we can take for granted in this country. The United Nations convention on the rights of the child, which we were able to ratify, is an important step forward and, shortly, my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Health, who has special responsibility for children, will be reporting on our progress in the UN convention. That makes it clear that there should be no two-tier service. We should not apply a standard for the adoption of children from overseas that is lower than the high standard that we apply at home.

The hon. Gentleman referred to training. Training, support and counselling are important in adoption, but so is the training of social workers generally. We recently appointed Geoffrey Greenwood to the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work. He will, I believe, ensure that there is greater public confidence in the work of social workers who are, after all, entrusted with making decisions of great significance.

The White Paper is about creating stable families. Many of the children for adoption today come from broken homes. Adoption offers them a brighter future. The White

[Mrs. Bottomley]

Paper makes it clear that their interests are best served by placing them with people, usually married couples, who can provide a secure and caring upbringing.

Several hon. Members *rose——*

Madam Speaker: Order. Perhaps we might now have brisk questions and brisk answers, please.

Mrs. Marion Roe (Broxbourne): I welcome my right hon. Friend's statement. Does she agree that the White Paper strikes a blow for common-sense judgment in adoption? Does she also agree that the adoption panels are particularly important in reinforcing that message? Is she able to give the House further details about her proposals to strengthen the panels?

Mrs. Bottomley: I thank my hon. Friend for her comments. It is a balance between professional judgment and the common-sense view. Adoption is about finding the best possible outcome for an individual child. It is no good a child hanging around in limbo while some theoretically politically correct parent appears over the horizon. It is better to place a child with the best available family in the circumstances. I very much hope that the additions to the adoption panels will reinforce that common sense approach. As I have said, we hope that among those who will join adoption panels are those who have been successful adoptive parents. All parents—both natural and adoptive—will know that sometimes practice and theory do not match perfectly.

Ms Liz Lynne (Rochdale): I welcome the publication of the White Paper, which we hope will get rid of some of the ridiculous cases of which we have heard during the past few months, when political correctness has been taken into account. As the assessment must be open and fair, will the right hon. Lady give an assurance that social workers will receive additional training where necessary? Will she ensure that successful adoptive parents will get back-up and support after the adoption, in same way that they do before the adoption? Will the natural parent have to give permission before a step-parent can adopt, as is the case at present?

Mrs. Bottomley: The hon. Lady asked about training, and I have commented on the improvements that we wish to see in social work training generally. There are many more qualified social workers than there were previously, but it is important that we continue to modernise and update the training that is available.

The hon. Lady is right about the importance of back-up and support, and it is important that it is provided in the early years. That is part of the work of counselling before an adoption has been entered into. Some parents resent the intrusive nature of that assessment. It is my view that adoption is an irrevocable decision, and it is important that every step is taken to be as sure as possible that there will be a positive outcome.

The adoption by a step-parent will need the agreement of the natural parent. However, we are introducing the parental responsibility agreement, which is a voluntary agreement which can be dealt with by a court without the complexity of a full adoption.

Mr. Peter Thurnham (Bolton, North-East): May I congratulate my right hon. Friend on injecting a strong dose of common sense into the social worker's world, which is too often full of absurd ideologies and pettifogging bureaucracies? Does she agree that would-be parents should be helped and guided, rather than hindered and obstructed? Will she consider setting up a specialist overseas adoption agency, such as exists in Scandinavia, to help and guide couples who wish to adopt from abroad in what is a complex area?

Mrs. Bottomley: I thank my hon. Friend, who, of all hon. Members, works hard to ensure that there is a more positive approach to inter-country adoption. We have already established a helpline for those who are interested in inter-country adoption, which has received about 1,000 calls in the first year. In due course, there may well be scope for a specialist agency involved in inter-country adoption. I had hoped that one of the existing voluntary agencies might take up the task, but, so far, the call has not been successful.

Mr. Terry Davis (Birmingham, Hodge Hill): Does the Secretary of State agree that it is important, in the interests of the child and of the adopting parents, that total confidentiality is given to the names and addresses of parents? How can the Secretary of State explain her decision to allow staff at the university of Birmingham to have access to such information without the permission of the mothers involved?

Mrs. Bottomley: I will look into that matter, and come back to the hon. Gentleman.

Dame Jill Knight (Birmingham, Edgbaston): Will my right hon. Friend take the opportunity to pay tribute to the wonderful work that is done by a great number of foster parents? Will she consider the harrowing cases where a foster parent has looked after a child for many years, but then the natural mother has come and claimed the child? Does the White Paper address that subject?

Mrs. Bottomley: It very much addresses the wise point that has been made by my hon. Friend. Foster parents provide magnificent services for children. There has been a dramatic fall in the number of children in institutions and in care in recent years. We provide the extra measure of a guardianship order which could be taken out by a foster parent so that a child could not then be removed by the mother without the matter returning to the court for its decision.

Ms Ann Coffey (Stockport): I was pleased to see a section in the White Paper on contact services after adoption. As the Secretary of State is aware, that is a very important area, given the complexity of adoption. However, has she taken account of the resource implications, because a great deal of staff time will be involved? When the measure is on the statute book, will the Secretary of State consider the resource implications and ensure that the implementation of this very good legislation is not prevented because the resources are scarce?

Mrs. Bottomley: Year on year, we have discussions with social services departments about their additional responsibilities and the resource implications of those responsibilities. The hon. Lady will be aware that there has been a dramatic increase in resources for social services

departments over the past three years. That has involved a 53 per cent. increase over the 1991 level and a 35 per cent. increase in real terms.

Be that as it may and to return to the hon. Lady's point, contact is an extremely sensitive point. However, now that so many more of the children involved are older and, therefore, have a living experience of their lives before adoption, many take the view that retaining some form of contact is appropriate for the most successful outcome. However, that should not be coercive. It requires careful consideration and, as the hon. Lady rightly said, detailed counselling and thought before decisions are made.

Mr. Patrick Nicholls (Teignbridge): I congratulate my right hon. Friend on a truly excellent statement. With regard to the White Paper, what would be the position in respect of a homosexual couple who applied for adoption? Does my right hon. Friend agree that, whatever sympathy one might feel for couples in that position, the pattern of normality of normal family life would be so lacking that it simply could not be appropriate for such an adoption to take place?

Mrs. Bottomley: Homosexual couples cannot adopt now and there is no intention that they should be able to. As the White Paper makes clear, there must be a strong presumption in favour of adoption by a married couple. That is the position in the White Paper and it is the position which we are setting out for the future.

Mrs. Helen Jackson (Sheffield, Hillsborough): Does the Secretary of State agree that it is quite inappropriate, and makes it extremely difficult for couples adopting a baby or small child, that there is no statutory right to maternity allowance or pay? A couple in that situation in my constituency had to ask, in the absence of statutory provision, whether their employer would be willing to provide time off work, and they were summarily dismissed. That adoptive couple began adopting with half the income that they were expecting. Having considered the matter, will the right hon. Lady urge the Secretary of State for Social Security and the Employment Secretary to take steps to remedy that situation for adoptive parents?

Mrs. Bottomley: Very few babies are now adopted at the stage when they would be eligible for maternity allowance. However, I will reflect on the hon. Lady's point.

Mr. Harry Greenway (Ealing, North): Does my right hon. Friend accept that so long as she says that, usually, married couples will adopt children, there will be a fear that homosexual couples of either sex might adopt children——

Mr. David Hinchliffe (Wakefield): This is irrelevant.

Mr. Greenway: I am concerned about children. Opposition Members should also be concerned about them. It is the children who matter.

Will my right hon. Friend also assure the House that when a child is removed for adopting purposes from a mother or father or just a mother, those people will receive proper counselling? Has my right hon. Friend ever had a mother in her surgery who said, "Give me back my baby"?

Mrs. Bottomley: My hon. Friend reinforces the concern felt by all Conservative Members about the fact that children need a mother and father. They need a stable family unit. We believe that there must be a strong presumption in favour of adoption by married couples. However, at the same time, there are circumstances in which an individual parent has provided most remarkable care for a child. For example, a widowed stepfather can adopt. My hon. Friend will be aware of women who have provided the most remarkable and dedicated care for a child, often with great needs, in a most impressive way. It would be quite wrong to prohibit that.

My hon. Friend the Member for Ealing, North (Mr. Greenway) conveys the sensitivity of so many such matters and, of course, for the mother in the case that he describes, careful counselling and continuing support are high priorities.

Mr. John Gunnell (Morley and Leeds, South): As I have an adopted sister and an adopted son and was a member of an adoption panel for some years, I welcome the Secretary of State's White Paper, especially its priorities for providing children with a stable home background. What number of members does she envisage for the new adoption panels and what quorum would be required, as I have found that that matters? I welcome her latest statement that adoption panels will not have to be rigid. I agree that, in the majority of cases, children go to homes of married couples, but adoption panels also deal with children in difficult circumstances who need special kinds of care. Occasionally, as she says, the care of one parent can be what is needed. Will she ensure that rigidity does not occur?

Mrs. Bottomley: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his comments. We will be consulting on the numbers of members and the most appropriate way in which to reinforce the adoption panels. The hon. Gentleman may comment on that consultation. The most appropriate approach to adoption, which I am sure is shared by the hon. Gentleman, is that it is about finding families for children and not necessarily providing children for childless couples. As long as we remember that it is the needs of the child for whom we must find the best possible home that should dictate decisions, children will benefit.

Mr. John Whittingdale (Colchester, South and Maldon): I join other hon. Members in congratulating my right hon. Friend on her extremely sensible statement. Will she confirm that parents who wish to adopt, but may encounter considerations of political correctness in local authorities, will have alternatives open to them?

Mrs. Bottomley: I will. My hon. Friend is right; a disconcerting number of parents still do not believe that they have had a fair hearing or handling of their case by the social services department of their local authority. I regret that, but it is the case. That is why we shall be strengthening the complaints procedure on the basis set out in the Children Act 1989 so that it will be possible for parents who feel that they have not been fairly treated not only to complain but to require an assessment by another authority or one of the 39 voluntary adoption agencies.

Mrs. Llin Golding (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I welcome the White Paper and especially the proposal to give children over a certain age the right to participate in their own adoption procedures. Will the Secretary of State clarify whether she intends that to apply to children over the age of 12, or 10 as she said in her statement?

Mrs. Bottomley: I am most grateful to the hon. Lady because my colleague, the Under-Secretary of State for Health, who leads on that subject, has been urging me to find an opportunity to correct my misstatement earlier. Children over 12—not 10—will be eligible. I apologise for misleading the House.

Mrs. Teresa Gorman (Billericay): Having made it clear that being fat, 40 and fairly well-off will no longer be a handicap in qualifying to adopt, will my right hon. Friend consider the case of couples—there are several in my constituency—who successfully adopted one child, waited a couple of years to allow that child to settle and when they applied to adopt a second child were told that they could not because they had become too old? Will she also consider that such couples often find an available child in another district, only to be told that that district will only allow people who live in its own geographical area to adopt children, which produces a lot of unhappiness among couples who have proved themselves worthy to be good parents?

Mrs. Bottomley: Ageism is one issue about which many people feel extremely strongly. Very often, older parents provide an excellent home for children and are perhaps wiser and calmer at the same time. Clearly, those making the assessment will want to be satisfied that there is a good prospect that the parents will be able to see the child through into early adulthood. That is quite different from the somewhat rigid, overbearing approach that seems to have been taken in some cases. My hon. Friend's point on finding a sibling for an adopted child is precisely the same as mine—it can only strengthen the existing placement and provide a very good home for another child.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): Is not the background to this matter the fact that, under the Conservative Government, children have been under attack more than at any other time, with cuts in education, housing and the national health service? Bearing in mind what the Secretary of State said to my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, Hillsborough (Mrs. Jackson), will she ensure that maternity benefits for adopted babies are provided? So few are involved that it will not be a large sum of money, and children are children whether they are adopted or born into a family.

The Secretary of State has mentioned, for example, an increase in local authority services. She talked about introducing a new complaints procedure for authorities and voluntary agencies. Will she finance it? Does she not realise that local authorities are strapped for cash? The large number of new services that are imposed on local authorities should be adequately financed. Will the Secretary of State give an assurance? Children are involved.

Mrs. Bottomley: There has been a dramatic increase in resources for social services, anyway. The White Paper spells out what good practice is. If the hon. Gentleman really wants to advance that argument, I am not aware that we have reduced funding for social service departments. The number of adoptions has fallen dramatically from about 25,000 to about 7,000 a year, and there is no suggestion that social services departments should receive fewer resources in that context.

As for the hon. Gentleman's other points, he cannot have been awake over the past few years. Child immunisation has gone through the ceiling—a dramatic increase—compared with standards that were delivered when his party was in government. Far more children now go on to university, and their education is very much better. There are far fewer children in care. There has also been a substantial increase in resources paid to low-income families. I suggest that the hon. Gentleman reads the White Paper and thinks of all the practical benefits that have been made available for children over the past 14 years.

Madam Speaker: I call Mr. Gyles Brandreth. *[Interruption.]* You are Mr. Gyles Brandreth?

Mr. Gyles Brandreth (City of Chester): Yes, I am, Madam Speaker. I am glad that we both recognise that.

As I come from Chester, where one of my distinguished predecessors, Sir Basil Nield, pioneered the Adoption Act 1950, I warmly welcome my right hon. Friend's statement, particularly the emphasis on common sense and the abandonment of sexism, ageism, racism and so on. Does she agree that the best way of ensuring comon sense on adoption panels is to have adoptive parents on them? Did I understand her to say that that would be a requirement or just desirable? What can she do to ensure that adoptive parents are regularly on adoption panels?

Mrs. Bottomley: If I have the name right, I am grateful to my hon. Friend the Member for City of Chester (Mr. Brandreth) for his contribution, because he has it precisely right. We intend that successful adoptive parents should join adoption panels. It is part of the citizens charter approach that the delivery of services should not be patronising and that it should work with people most closely involved so that we can learn from the experience of those who use the services as we provide them for others.

Mr. Matthew Carrington (Fulham): I congratulate my right hon. Friend on sensible and humane proposals which cannot be brought into force soon enough for the many people who are currently experiencing problems with adoption. Our hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Health will know of a case in my constituency in which proposals in the White Paper would have been of great assistance. Is there any way in which the proposals or some of the proposals can be put into force sooner, perhaps by regulation or by common agreement and influence, so that they could assist people who are currently suffering problems?

Mrs. Bottomley: My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State is well aware of my hon. Friend's constituency case. It may be that some parts of the White Paper can be introduced earlier by means of good practice and guidance. But these are complex and sensitive matters and I believe that the House and others will want to consider carefully the proposals outlined in the White Paper before we move to final and firm legislation.

Mr. Rupert Allason (Torbay): I welcome my right hon. Friend's proposals, but will she clarify the streamlined immigration proposals that are in the White Paper?

Mrs. Bottomley: Yes. At present, those involved in inter-country adoption often have to go through the procedures both in this country and in the country from which the child is arriving. Similarly, they have to go through immigration procedures from scratch. As we have signed the Hague convention, we will make sure also that

we have thoroughly streamlined those procedures, and will be considering the precise legislative route to achieve that in the weeks ahead.

Mr. Jonathan Evans (Brecon and Radnor): I, too, congratulate my right hon. Friend on achieving the degree of consensus that she has with the White Paper. Is it the Government's intention to ensure that the principle of the welfare of the child being paramount, which is enshrined in the Children Act 1989, is the same principle that will be brought into the legislation that she has said she will introduce?

What arrangements does my right hon. Friend intend to put before the House to ensure that children who are over the age of 12, who are now to be given the opportunity of participating in the process of adoption, will have their wishes properly considered and be given proper assistance to ensure that their views are put across with force?

Mrs. Bottomley: I thank my right hon. Friend, who is extremely knowledgeable in those matters. The principle of the child's interest being paramount is the founding basis on which the White Paper was prepared, along with the need for the courts and social services to extend the consideration of the child's welfare into adulthood, which is a further step forward. Children over the age of 12 will be full party to the proceedings. They will be able to receive legal aid and have their views known.

Miss Joan Lestor (Eccles): I have a strange sense of deja vu as I stand here today. I welcome the consultation paper, and I agree with the right hon. Lady that we are talking about services to children and the interests of children. They are central to any action that we take about our children.

The White Paper says that, as I think the right hon. Lady underlined, when we are considering adoption, we must be sure that it is better than any alternative that may be available to the child. In such a situation, there is no room for rigidity, and in many instances the White Paper and the right hon. Lady have made that clear. Every child is unique and, therefore, the needs of that child will be unique.

The White Paper states that children should stay with their birth families where that is possible. That applies also to children overseas and, before we bring children from overseas, we have a duty to ensure that their interests are met and not disregarded.

I welcome quick decisions about children. Too many of our children are left in limbo for a long time pending decisions. With due respect to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Edgbaston (Dame J. Knight), we dealt with the question of tug-of-love children successfully in the 1989 Act, but the question of children in limbo still exists and that is a matter about which we need to be careful.

I do not want to sound a note of disagreement here, but I should like the right hon. Lady, in the process of consultation, to take up the point made by my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett). Although it is true that babies in this country are not being adopted, and, as I think the right hon. Lady implied, maternity leave therefore does not apply, babies from overseas are being adopted—a point that the right hon. Lady made.

In addition, if one adopts an older child in this country, it is just as important that it has weeks with its adoptive parent to be bonded, just as a baby needs bonding. The same facilities that apply to mothers who give birth naturally should apply to all mothers and parents, irrespective of the origin of the child. That is very important.

I welcome the statement about open adoption where appropriate and applicable, so long as it does not jeopardise the development and growth of a new family. Open adoption is not easy. It is not easy for adoptive parents or natural parents to continue with contact. If natural parents are given a guarantee that it will not be a complete break, often they will agree to adoption and give the child a settled life. That is why I welcome that.

I welcome the move away from any rigidity on mixed ethnic adoption and fostering. That is important. As we proceed with this, I hope that there will be much greater encouragement for parents from ethnic minority groups to apply to adopt and foster. I do not think that we have done enough work in that direction. I certainly welcome the move. Many years ago, the right hon. Lady and I discussed the move away from any rigidity and the need to match a child. What is important is that the child must have a solid home—it cannot be left in limbo waiting for that to come along.

On the matter of rigidity, the principle of two parents is a sound one. But each child is unique and there will always be special circumstances in which the two-parent situation will not apply—and it should not be made to apply.

I welcome the suggestion about stepchildren and their adoption. As the House knows, we are moving into an era in which many stepchildren exist in families as a result of new marriages and relationships. It is important that we get that right. I hope that we will apply to the adoption of children from overseas exactly the same standards as those that we apply to the adoption of children in this country. In the past, I do not think that that has been done. I do not think that the vetting has been anything like as good as it should have been. I hope that we will examine the disclosures which, unfortunately, we constantly see about people here going abroad and buying children on the open market. That is disgraceful and it is something which we must examine.

I welcome the Hague convention. It will give us much more protection for children being adopted from overseas. Yesterday, my hon. Friend the Member for Wakefield (Mr. Hinchliffe) mentioned the work of the Child Migrants Trust and the revelations—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. May I draw the attention of the hon. Lady to the fact that she is not winding up a major debate? She is making a few pithy comments on a statement which I understand she already welcomes very much. She has been speaking for four full minutes—*[Interruption.]* I time things carefully. I wonder whether she would conclude and allow the Secretary of State to make a quick response.

Miss Lestor: In conclusion, and as pithily as I can, I say that we should learn from the experiences of the Child Migrants Trust with regard to children from abroad as well as those here.

The White Paper, which I welcome—I hope that we will consult on it—will make us a much more child-friendly society with regard to the children that we have in our trust to place properly with future parents.

Mrs. Bottomley: I am grateful to you, Madam Speaker, for being tolerant of the hon. Lady, because she speaks with special knowledge of these subjects.

[Mrs. Bottomley]

The hon. Lady is absolutely right—the Child Migrants Trust has demonstrated how badly things go wrong when proper care is not taken. There can be no question of profiteering from trafficking in children. At the same time, we should be without prejudice. For children for whom there is no foreseeable prospect of their having a home in their country of origin, if there is a family that can provide them with a stable home in this country, we should not be prejudiced against such an arrangement.

I totally agree with the hon. Lady on the question of open adoption. In theory, it sounds splendid. In practice, I suspect that it is difficult to arrange. It is different for older children who know the previous family with whom they were placed, but I totally share the hon. Lady's view that it should be approached with great caution and care. I thank the hon. Lady for her overall welcome of the White Paper.

Occupational Pensions

4.18 pm

The Secretary of State for Social Security (Mr. Peter Lilley): With permission, Madam Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the report of the Pension Law Review Committee.

Following the Maxwell pension scandal, I was determined to restore confidence in the security of pension schemes, so, in June last year, I set up the committee under Professor Goode to review the framework of law and regulation governing occupational pension schemes. The committee presented its report at the end of September. I decided to publish it immediately. It is immensely thorough, comprehensive, lucid and long. I have no doubt it will become the seminal work in the development of pension law for well into the next century. I want to place on record my gratitude to Professor Goode and every member of his committee.

The Government, like most of those involved in the pension business, are still considering the report in detail. Rather than wait until we have completed our deliberation, I thought it would be helpful to the House to make an early statement—to allow right hon. and hon. Members to express their immediate views on the issues raised by the report; to announce how we will handle the consideration of the report; and to indicate our preliminary overall response to it.

The report aims to modernise and improve the framework of law affecting occupational pension funds and to bring about a fair balance between the interests of scheme members, pensioners and employers. The Government entirely share these aims.

A fundamental question for the committee was whether trust law remained an appropriate basis for pension law or should be replaced by some form of corporate law. The committee concluded that trust law remains the best available framework for occupational pension schemes. The Government agree with this conclusion.

The committee was determined to fulfil its objective of ensuring greater security for occupational pensions without imposing burdens that would undermine the willingness of responsible employers to run pension schemes. Indeed, it has even suggested ways of simplifying some existing requirements. I welcome this approach.

Altogether the committee made 218 recommendations. I shall be seeking views on those recommendations and on other issues raised by the committee. I shall shortly issue some discussion papers as a basis for detailed exchanges with interested parties. There are five key areas on which we are particularly interested to seek views.

The first is solvency. The committee proposed that a statutory minimum solvency requirement, with certain specific exceptions, be applied to funded pension schemes. The proposal has already raised some questions about how solvency would be measured; how frequently a deficiency might occur, and how rapidly a deficiency could be restored. But it is clearly important to ensure that schemes are properly funded.

The second is surpluses. I deliberately drew up the committee's terms of reference wide enough to enable it to consider this issue. The committee concluded that

"sweeping changes in the law governing surplus are not needed."

But it proposed some additional restrictions on payments to the employer and made other recommendations relating to surpluses.

The third is the management of schemes. The committee proposed a range of measures designed to improve the way in which schemes are managed and to enhance security of members' benefits. They include the appointment of member trustees; giving members more sharply focused information; and strengthening the role of professional advisers. Many schemes already involve their members and provide clear information to them. I want to encourage that and shall be considering whether we need to set minimum standards in this area for all schemes.

The fourth is compensation. The committee recommended a compensation scheme, funded by a post-event levy on pension schemes. The intention is to protect members and pensioners in the event of fraud, theft or the intentional misappropriation of assets. I recognise the case for some form of compensation scheme, as a long stop, behind a strengthened legal and regulatory framework. We shall be exploring the implications of this proposal too.

The fifth is regulation. The Government accept that the present arrangements for regulating pension funds need reform. The committee made a case for a quite new regulatory mechanism, with significantly wider powers than those currently held by the Occupational Pensions Board. I want to listen carefully to any comments on the detail of the committee's recommendations, not least to ensure that the burden on business is the minimum compatible with effective regulation.

The committee drew attention to a number of issues without making specific recommendations. In particular, it highlighted the complexity of the current arrangements for occupational schemes to contract out of the state earnings-related pension scheme.

It pointed out that many commentators had criticised those complexities, although it also noted that changes would not be straightforward. I shall want to discuss that issue with interested parties.

I and my colleagues in government shall give further consideration to the whole body of recommendations in the report in the light of the debate which Professor Goode has initiated and which our discussion papers will carry forward.

While we consider the committee's proposals, we must also press on with considering the implications for occupational pension schemes of judgments in the European Court of Justice. The court recently ruled, in the Ten Oever case, that the requirement of equal treatment applies only in respect of pensionable service since May 1990—the date of the Barber ruling. That judgment is excellent news. It confirms our interpretation of the court's ruling in the Barber case. Full retrospection would have cost British industry up to £50 billion to fund unforeseen liabilities.

We expect rulings on a number of related cases, notably the Coloroll case, for which the Government have provided financial support. In the meantime, I have asked my officials to begin discussion with interested parties some of the issues arising from the latest ruling, and from the Advocate General's opinion on Coloroll. We have recently issued a short, technical paper to inform those discussions.

Earlier last month I published the report by the working group on the alignment of tax and national insurance contributions. I set up the working group in May as part of our campaign to reduce the burdens on business. The issues raised by the group's report have a bearing on our discussions with employers about the contracting out arrangements that I have mentioned. The report sets out a number of recommendations and some challenging options for aligning the two systems. Some of them would have significant implications for the benefit system and would require further consideration within Government.

I am attracted to the proposals for aligning the definition of earnings. I intend to consult the business community, and others concerned, next year about how that might be done.

Our policies to encourage private pension provision have been outstandingly successful. United Kingdom pension schemes own more than half of all pension fund assets in the European Community. We are determined to build on our success and to reinforce confidence in the security of occupational pension schemes. We aim to create a framework for occupational pensions that is secure, stable and fair, and to encourage people to make provision for their retirement.

The report of the Pension Law Review Committee provides a firm foundation for the debate that must take place before decisions are made.

Mr. Donald Dewar (Glasgow, Garscadden): I welcome the report, and I also wish to congratulate Professor Goode and his colleagues. Theirs is a formidable achievement. They have reduced a massive tangle of representations—I think that there were 1,669 submissions—to coherent order. The committee's work is, as I think everyone in the House recognises, vital, because confidence has been severely shaken by the Maxwell scandal. A new regulatory framework is essential. There must be adequate safeguards. Everything sensible and possible must be done to prevent another Maxwell-style disaster.

Much of the committee's work is self-evidently useful, but did the Minister note the comment in a leader in the *Financial Times* that the report is

"far from a radical document"?

Is he perhaps surprised that those doubts are widely reflected, certainly in the press? I notice, for example, that *The Sunday Times* headline was:

"Goode falls short of a revolution."

That in *The Independent on Sunday* was:

"Error on the side of caution"

and that in *The Guardian* was:

"Goode is not good enough."

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): What does the hon. Gentleman think?

Mr. Dewar: I will come to that in just a minute if the hon. Gentleman will be patient.

Does the Minister accept that the report should be seen as a starting point, and not necessarily as a finished article?

At the heart of any discussions of pensions are the questions of ownership, the control of funds and choice for the employee. The report—it is a matter for future debate—does little to recognise the important principle that was laid down in the Barber judgment, that pensions are a form of deferred pay. Many are, and will be, disappointed that there has not been a fundamental shift of control in favour of scheme members. I welcome, however, the recommendations on a regulator. There is a strong case for that office, publicly funded and with the power to supervise and, where necessary, impose discipline. Recent history has underlined the shortcomings of self-regulatory organisations.

[Mr. Dewar]

We also support the principle of a compensation scheme. I recognise why the Committee felt that it must be limited to

"fraud, theft or other misappropriation",

but does the Minister accept that there will be further argument, particularly about the definition of those terms and the circumstances in which the compensation scheme will be brought into play? Was I right to understand from the Minister's statement that he clearly backs the principle and will move on it? I ask him that because the reference to a long-stop arrangement was somewhat grudging in tone, and it would be helpful if he would clear that up.

Does the Secretary of State recognise that the Maxwell pensioners, still living with uncertainty and fear, will regard the safeguards being built into the system as a frustrating case of locking the stable door after the horse has bolted? The House will expect the Government to do everything possible to speed the recovery of the missing assets and cut a pathway through the complex litigation still taking place, which, to a layman, looks positively Dickensian.

The fears about the security of pension funds and the need for safeguards, sometimes in unexpected quarters, have been underlined recently by the Government's shabby conduct over the British Rail pension fund and the fears expressed by the chairman of the trustees of that fund about how the Secretary of State for Transport has conducted his business.

I give notice that, while welcoming the improvements, we shall want to look closely at many controversial areas. The treatment of surpluses and unilateral contribution holidays, and the protection of members' interests from arbitrary changes in the rules of the schemes, are important matters. Although the proposal that any payment to the employer from scheme funds will require the regulator's consent is welcome, we doubt whether it is enough in itself. Is there not a case for the Minister and the House looking beyond Goode, whose timid conclusion was that "sweeping changes in the law governing surpluses are not needed"?

Unlike the Minister, I quote that without great satisfaction.

We also want to look at the minimum solvency requirement. I recognise that there are many important arguments about definition and implementation and it is important that we get it right. However, I hope that the Minister agrees that it is an important discipline and should be considered seriously.

Does the Minister recognise the disappointment over the proposal that, in final salary schemes, only one third of the trustees will be appointed by active members? Although those recommendations represent a significant improvement on the present position, does he agree that they may be inadequate? Does that recommendation reach the standard of best practice which Goode said would be his guiding light?

May I ask a minor but interesting question? Has the Secretary of State looked at recommendation 80, which deals with the transfer of undertaking regulations? Will he take the advice of Professor Goode and his colleagues and support a test case in the European Court of Justice to establish how the regulations may affect pensions?

I was interested in what the Minister said—it was slightly unexpected but none the less welcome—about the Advocate General's opinion in the Coloroll case, the implications of the Barber judgment, and the recent Ten Oever judgment. If the Minister now accepts—I gather that he does, rightly—that the decision is to rule out retrospection, which will save up to £50 billion, will he turn his mind to the introduction of limited price indexing, for which statutory authority already exists?

All hon. Members, irrespective of party, recognise that a long retirement on an un-indexed pension often ends in pain and distress. There is now a strong case for implementing paragraph 3 of schedule 2 to the Social Security Act 1990, and I hope that the Secretary of State can assure us that that will be on the agenda.

Finally, does the Minister accept the importance of maintaining momentum and pushing on to legislation at the earliest opportunity—certainly in the 1994-95 Session? I think that that is Government policy, but it would be helpful if he would underline and nail that down for the House's benefit today. Although adequate consultation must take place, will the Minister assure us that it will not delay progress or mask the urgent need for reform that is sufficiently radical to allow those who rely on occupational pensions to look forward to the future with confidence?

Mr. Lilley: I am grateful to the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) for welcoming the report and paying tribute to the committee. I agree that the report should be seen as a starting point for further debate; I think that Professor Goode would also accept that it is not a finished product that can be accepted without further detailed consideration.

The hon. Gentleman said that the report was far from radical. My criterion in judging it is not its degree of radicalness, but the degree of effectiveness with which it can achieve the objective on which we are all agreed—greater security for pension funds. That is the criterion that we will use in evaluating all the different proposals.

The hon. Gentleman also said that control should be shifted to pension fund members. The report contains recommendations to that effect, and we shall of course consider them; but I understand that the hon. Gentleman would like us to go further. He welcomes the committee's regulatory proposals. We shall examine them closely: we recognise the need for reform. We also accept that there is a case for compensation. I described it as a long stop because I believe that prevention is better than cure, and I envisage any compensatory procedures performing that role.

The British Rail pension fund issue was dealt with satisfactorily yesterday by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, who made it clear that the pensioners would suffer no reduction in their rights, that the taxpayer would guarantee their price-indexed pensions and that they would be able to share in any distributable surplus in the future.

We shall, of course, look further—as the hon. Member for Garscadden implied that he would do—at pension fund holidays, and the other issues that he listed. We would particularly welcome the views of experts on the issue of solvency. We will certainly give serious consideration to the proposals of Professor Goode and the committee.

As for the timing of legislation, we consider it right to proceed with due speed, but thoroughly. We therefore want to consult, which will make legislation impossible this year —as the hon. Member for Garscadden implicitly recognised. The earliest possible date would be in the next parliamentary year, 1994-95; but, as the hon. Gentleman

knows, I can give no commitments until we know what other pressure for places is produced by the Queen's Speech.

I am grateful for the hon. Gentleman's overall welcome for the proposals.

Mr. David Shaw (Dover): Will my right hon. Friend confirm that, had many of the regulatory proposals in the report been in place when Robert Maxwell was in charge of his pension funds, the problems that he caused could have been prevented? When carefully examining all Professor Goode's proposals, will my right hon. Friend consider a key issue that coud make him very popular with millions of women and men? I refer to the problem of early leavers and the surpluses that remain in pension funds.

Many employers are taking pension holidays as a result of surpluses created not by successful investment, but by those who have left pension funds early and are not receiving increases at the appropriate rate. Will my right hon. Friend consider carefully the arrangements operating in Sweden and Germany, where early leavers are treated better? In that respect, the Goode report perhaps does not go far enough.

Overall, however, we all welcome my right hon. Friend's decision to ask Professor Goode to carry out the inquiry which has produced such an excellent report.

Mr. Lilley: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for his welcome to the report.

When the report was published, Professor Goode was asked whether the measures that he proposed would have stopped the Maxwell fund scandal, and he said that he believed that it had probably created difficulties, hurdles and obstacles sufficient to have prevented that. However, he recognised—as we all have to recognise—that we can never be 100 per cent. certain of stopping crime. We have to ensure that there are enough early indicators, under a proper framework of regulation, to prevent, wherever possible, such offences from occurring. That will be the criterion that we will use to evaluate the proposals.

Mr. Don Foster (Bath): I also welcome Professor Goode's report. Like the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar), I welcome the somewhat reluctant recognition by the Secretary of State of the need for some form of compensation scheme. Does the Secretary of State now acknowledge that the Government were wrong to exclude occupational pensions from the compensation arrangements under the Financial Services Act 1986, and the urgency of the need to right that wrong?

Does the Secretary of State further acknowledge that his statement will do nothing to provide additional comfort to Maxwell pensioners? Will he not take the opportunity to give that comfort to those pensioners by agreeing to underwrite the pensions of all those who have suffered at Maxwell's hands?

Mr. Lilley: I am delighted that the report has all-party support. As a basis for further consideration, that is very welcome.

The hon. Gentleman suggested that I was reluctant to consider a compensation scheme. I repeat that the priority must be prevention. It is right that we should have a compensation scheme as a long stop, but it must be offered only in the last resort.

As for Maxwell pensioners, the report makes it clear that it is not envisaged that any compensation scheme should be made retrospective. The Government believe that the right way to help Maxwell pensioners is to assist the trustees of the Maxwell pension funds to secure a return of assets. That would ensure that those funds can continue to pay pensioners their pensions, as we have enabled them to do so far.

We have supported Sir Peter Webster in his efforts to achieve a global settlement of all outstanding issues, which will be warmly welcomed by all pensioners. His efforts would not be helped if we were to introduce a retrospective compensation fund.

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): Does my right hon. Friend agree that Maxwell pensioners, including those in my constituency, will welcome the Goode report as a basis for protection in the future? Does he further agree that revolution often leads to legal uncertainty, and that often the best approach, as recommended in the Goode report, is to build on existing trust laws and establish a structured statutory framework of rights and duties? That would lead to less bureaucracy, more effective regulation and more certainty than the opposite approach of revolutionary change and a wide-ranging corporate law approach.

Mr. Lilley: I know that my hon. Friend is concerned about the position of Maxwell pensioners in his own constituency, and he is right about both the attitude of those pensioners towards the Goode report and the lack of necessity to adopt a revolutionary approach for its own sake. We have to make sure that in future we have an effective system, which will prevent such events from recurring and make members of funds secure in the knowledge that their assets will be there to pay their pensions for decades to come. That is what we seek to achieve.

Mr. Stanley Orme (Salford, East): The Secretary of State is aware that some of the best occupational schemes in Britain have very large employee representation—for example, ICI currently has a 50 per cent. employee representation. What is wrong with that? Why does he not support it?

Mr. Lilley: I have not taken a firm view on the recommendations in the Goode report about member trustees and employee representation. We will consider the proposals put forward and the responses that they elicit. I know that many good schemes have 50 per cent. or more member trustees, but so did the Maxwell funds. That alone does not guarantee the security of the funds, but it is not a reason for not considering it. We will consider the appropriate level of representation and the circumstances in which it should take place. I want to be sure about whether we need a statutory obligation to ensure some level of best practice. That is one of the issues on which I would like people's views.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield): I warmly welcome my right hon. Friend's positive and informative statement. There are not many hon. Members who do not have Maxwell pensioners and Mirror Group Newspapers pensioners in their constituencies. Does my right hon. Friend accept that there is some concern that legislation to deal with companies prepared to pillage their pension funds to bolster cash flow, or for other purposes, will not be introduced for more than 12 months? Is it not possible to introduce some interim legislation to prevent pensioners

[Mr. Nicholas Winterton]

from having their pensions placed in great jeopardy, as occurred with the Mirror Group Newspapers or Dunn and Company pension funds?

Mr. Lilley: I am grateful for my hon. Friend's welcome for the report. I have considered whether we should move ahead speedily with interim legislation. I said to Professor Goode that, if in the course of his work he felt that he could make proposals to ensure greater security, which could be legislated on in advance of the final report, on an interim basis, I would respond positively to them. He did not think that that was the right approach, or that he could disentangle some aspects of his recommendations from others.

We have to ensure that what we do makes the system better and safer, and that we do not provide new opportunities and anomalies for some rogue to exploit, which might happen if we introduced ill-thought-out and hasty legislation.

As a result of the Maxwell fund scandal, everyone in the pension fund world is currently on red alert, and we have greater security within the existing framework than ever before. I want to put in place arrangements that will ensure that, when the Maxwell memory has dimmed with time, we will still have a safe system which will give early warning of any wrongdoing or areas which may need investigation.

Mr. Frank Field (Birkenhead): May I add my thanks to Professor Goode and the Committee for their report? Is the Secretary of State aware that, although pension fund members own half of British industry, no member feels that he owns anything whatsoever? Will he give an undertaking that, when the Bill on pension law reform is brought forward, there will be provision in it for individual members to own their pension funds?

Mr. Lilley: I know that the hon. Member is keen on moving towards individual ownership of pension funds. Professor Goode and his committee indicated that individual ownership is a natural and inherent part of money purchase schemes, but is less so in final salary schemes. We have increased individuals' rights in respect of pensions, and have given them greater access to information and participation. We want to examine the report's recommendations to see how far forward we can carry that process.

It is a remarkable thing that individuals in this country, through their pension schemes, have such an immense ownership of wealth. It is good for them and the economy, and we want to make sure that that wealth is not only safe but is recognised as part of the rights that people have as a result of their savings during their working lives.

Mr. David Willetts (Havant): I welcome the report, because it shows how right my right hon. Friend was to establish the Pension Law Review Committee. I particularly welcome the recognition in my right hon. Friend's statement and the report that it is important that pensions are not over-regulated. As the Department of Social Security has now commenced its consultation exercise, I hope that it will not add extra regulations and new devices, but, if anything, will deregulate pensions further.

Mr. Lilley: My hon. Friend is right. We must make sure that we do not impose such burdens on employers that they cease to run pension funds—that would be to kill the goose that laid the golden egg. Equally, we must provide security; we must not trade off security to achieve lower burdens on business. But we must find ways of achieving security that do not impose excessive burdens on business. That principle also guided the committee. I welcome that, and the fact that it tried to find ways in which existing regulatory burdens can be lightened in the process of any reforms that we may introduce in future.

Mr. Alistair Darling (Edinburgh, Central): Does the Minister accept that, if he set a firm timetable for legislation, that would concentrate minds—not least in his Department—during the consultative process? Does he further accept that, for both public and industry, the need to put a regulator in place as soon as possible is urgent —unless the Government are to continue their sometimes casual, if not slapdash, approach to regulation in the public interest?

Mr. Lilley: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that the minds of my officials are distinctly concentrated on making as rapid progress as is consistent with effective consultation and achieving sensible outcomes. It is my experience that employers and others involved in the pensions industry—we will want to involve them too in the consultative process—are also eager to make progress. We will have no difficulty on that front.

I have not laid out a firm programme for legislation, for the same reasons why no Secretary of State could do so: we cannot bind ourselves before we have made decisions about the competing pressures on future parliamentary time.

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): I congratulate my right hon. Friend on his excellent statement in response to the Goode report. I ask him to bear in mind that the average occupational or private pension is about £60 a week, which, compared with a Government pension, is very good. So in all our efforts, we must attempt not to kill but to cure. I ask my right hon. Friend to bear this in mind when he deals with the regulatory side.

Mr. Lilley: My hon. Friend makes a good point. The average pensioner in receipt of an occupational pension receives £60 or more a week on top of his or her basic state pension as a result of the savings that he has put aside during his working life. New pensioners typically receive more than £70 a week from their occupation pensions, and the amount is rising. We want it to rise more as more people make better provision during their working lives. We want to encourage that. Essential in that process is reinforcing the confidence that people have in the pension funds in which they invest.

Mr. Terry Rooney (Bradford, North): During the consultation exercise, will the right hon. Gentleman look at the local government scheme, which includes more than 1 million contributors and several hundred thousand beneficiaries? It always requires legislation to update the benefits in the scheme, which is consequently some 10 years behind current pension provision elsewhere.

Mr. Lilley: I will certainly look at that, although I am almost certain that it is an aspect rather different from the matters that will be central to implementing the Goode recommendations and the ideas that they were based on —but I will certainly examine the hon. Gentleman's point.

Mr. Alan Duncan (Rutland and Melton): Has my right hon. Friend had the opportunity to reflect on the position of occupational pensions in the wider provision of pensions? Will he agree that they are a product in decline, as they restrict labour mobility and people have no control over their assets? Does he join me in wishing to encourage the rapid expansion of personal pensions that move with the individual and allow him some control over the assets in which he has invested?

Mr. Lilley: We need not have all one or all the other—all personal pensions or all final salary schemes. We have made it possible for people to have greater choice as between the two. We opened up personal pension schemes, since when about 5 million people have taken advantage of them. It was originally forecast that this would be at the expense of occupational pension schemes. In fact, the number of people with occupational pensions has risen at precisely the same time as 5 million more people have gained personal pensions.

We want to foster both types of scheme and we are keen not to make either less attractive to pensioners or employers.

Mr. Peter L. Pike (Burnley): Does the Secretary of State recognise that many of my constituents have been affected by the serious abuses in the Belling pension scheme? Can he take immediate action to ensure that directors cannot, as they did in this case, borrow large amounts from the pension fund? Will he also ensure that pension funds do not buy, at inflated prices, subsidiaries of the parent company—as also happened in the Belling pension scheme?

Mr. Lilley: As the hon. Gentleman knows, regulations are now in force which limit the ability of pension schemes to invest in their own underlying parent companies, either by lending money to them or by buying shares or property that belong to them. The potential for that abuse has thus been severely restricted.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth (Surrey, East): I warmly welcome my right hon. Friend's measured response to this complex and sensitive matter. I feel certain that by approaching it thus we shall achieve what we want—maximum protection for pensioners without impairment of the way in which pension schemes and pension fund management operate.

Does my right hon. Friend agree that not least among the most sensitive areas that Goode examined was that of solvency ratios, which are essential to any compensation? Will he give particular attention to that?

Mr. Lilley: I agree with my hon. Friend's points. We will give close consideration to the proposals on solvency and to the response that they have already elicited. It is important to get this right; it is equally important to ensure that schemes are properly funded.

Mr. Jimmy Wray (Glasgow, Provan): The Minister has more confidence in Goode's proposals than Goode himself has. Goode could not give the committee a guarantee that they would be foolproof. Although he said that scheme members can be members of the trustee board, and although he said that a pensions regulator will be appointed, Goode's recommendation was ultimately to give sole responsibility for these matters to employers. If we are looking for a foolproof system of offering pensioners security, surely the first thing to do is to remove that power from employes.

Mr. Lilley: Professor Goode spelled out his intention when he said that he wanted to make a reality of the pension promise. We want to make sure that the promise inherent in membership of a pension fund is fulfilled—that its assets are there to ensure that it is fulfilled and properly funded, and that abuses do not occur. The professor said that nothing could be foolproof. That is a truism with which we would all agree. Our job is to try to exclude every conceivable opportunity for abuse and wrongdoing. That will be the criterion that we use when developing Professor Goode's ideas.

Dr. Liam Fox (Woodspring): Can my right hon. Friend confirm that there will be a deferral of any collection of state scheme premiums from all the Maxwell pension funds? Will not that amount to a £100 million interest-free loan to the Maxwell fund? Will it not be a genuinely practical way of helping Maxwell pensioners, many of whom live in the Paulton area of my constituency?

Mr. Lilley: We have already announced the deferral of collection of state scheme premiums, which in effect gives the Maxwell pension schemes an interest-free loan worth more than £100 million. That has been widely welcomed by those involved. It has meant that pensions have been enabled to continue to be paid when they might not otherwise have been. It has eased the problem and provided a longer period in which to achieve an overall settlement, which I hope Sir Peter Webster will be able to achieve.

Mr. Keith Bradley (Manchester, Withington): We want to endorse the welcome on both sides of the House for the statement. We look forward to the discussion papers, because it has been plain from questions today that there is not total agreement on issues such as solvency, surpluses, management, ownership, control, the number of trustees and a compensation scheme. Although we welcome the Secretary of State's assurance that he will support such a scheme, we shall look at it in greater detail when the proposals emerge, and we shall be pressing for the regulation of new funds when the legislation appears.

I recognise that any compensation scheme will not greatly benefit the Maxwell pensioners, but I press the right hon. Gentleman to use his good offices to ensure that litigation against companies holding Maxwell assets and asset chasing for the Maxwell pension scheme are pursued with all haste. Will he also ensure that all the money that is available from that source goes back to the Maxwell pensioners and is not swallowed up by legal or professional fees? I am certain that the Government will press that point strongly on behalf of Maxwell pensioners.

Secondly, the Secretary of State did not respond to the point raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) about limited index-linking of schemes in future. Will he make some further comment on that?

Finally, we will be pressing strongly for legislation to be brought forward at the earliest opportunity in the 1994-95 Session, and if there is anything we can do to help him press that case, we will be pleased to assist.

Mr. Lilley: I am grateful for the hon. Gentleman's support, which I am sure will carry a great deal of weight

[Mr. Lilley]

with my right hon. Friend should I meet any opposition in these matters. I am also grateful to know that some Opposition time may be made available to help us.

We shall certainly continue to do all we can to ensure that the Maxwell pension fund trustees and others pursue as effectively and rapidly as possible a settlement, particularly within the possible global settlement which Sir Peter Webster is now seeking. The object of that is not only to ensure that the issue is resolved more rapidly than if it went to court, but we are saved funds being drained off in lawyers' fees so that the money instead goes back to the pensioners in greater measure. I know that that has the widespread support of the House.

As far as limited price indexation is concerned, we made it clear that we intended to resolve a complexity of issues which bear on the obligations of pension funds before we decide whether and, if so, when that obligation should be imposed on pension funds. It is right that those other issues should be satisfactorily resolved first.

Points of Order

5 pm

Mr. Brian Wilson (Cunninghame, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. It is uncannily ironic that my point of order should follow the exchanges that have just taken place, as it relates to what is intended to be the biggest pension robbery in British history, the robbery of the British Rail pension fund.

In the other place this afternoon, the Government have now suffered two defeats on the pension fund issue in the Railways Bill. The other place has confirmed the view taken by many Members in the House last night and by the chairman of the British Rail pension fund about the conduct of the Government in reneging on assurances that had been given, and in seeking to gain the powers of Ministers to make changes to the pension fund——

Madam Speaker: Order. What is the point of order for me?

Mr. Wilson: The conduct of the Government in seeking to make those changes has been rejected by the Lords this afternoon in the same way as it was rejected by Opposition Members last night.

Can you use your good offices, Madam Speaker, to bring the Leader of the House to the House as soon as possible to make a statement about the proposed conduct of business hereafter and, preferably, could there be talks to abandon the whole unwanted Railways Bill as the threat to railway pensioners arises only as a by-product of that dreadful Bill which has no support in the country?

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is it related to this matter?

Mr. Skinner: Yes. As the two pension proposals have been defeated by the votes of Members in another place, taking into account the composition of the House of Lords —the ratio of Members taking the Whip is about four Tories to one Labour—would it not seem credible to argue that, as the Government have a massive majority there and a majority here in the House of Commons, now that the Lords have defeated them twice, surely it makes sense that the Government should accept the decision that has been made, so that we can get on with business?

Ms Ann Coffey (Stockport): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Does it relate to the same point of order?

Ms Coffey: No.

Madam Speaker: Then I shall return to the hon. Lady when I have replied to the hon. Member for Cunningham, North (Mr. Wilson).

I have had no official news as yet, but, as the House knows, we have a long parliamentary day and no doubt we will hear how to proceed in due course.

Mr. Peter Hain (Neath): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Why has the Department of Trade and Industry document, "Clean Coal Technology: Options for the Future" not been placed before the House? It states:

"Coal can continue to play a significant role well into the twenty-first century".

Surely that is a supreme hypocrisy on the day when Calverton colliery is closing and the coal industry has been decimated. Do the Government intend to make a statement on the matter? Is it right that the document should be issued to the press, but not placed in the Library of the House?

Madam Speaker: I have not had sight of the document and I cannot be certain whether it is the sort of document that is normally laid before the House until I have seen it. I can say to the hon. Gentleman that I have not yet had any notice of any more statements which Ministers are about to make today.

Mr. Tony Marlow (Northampton, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Item 13 on the Order Paper is a proposal under statutory instrument to impose VAT on orange juice. I know that it is informal, unofficial and does not exist, but earlier this week we had our party Whips and there was no indication at that stage that the matter would be debated. There was a debate in a Statutory Instruments Committee earlier this week on the subject, but today is the first time that many hon. Members have been aware that the matter is coming before the House this evening.

I dare say that, if it is on the Order Paper, it must be an order, but it seems that there should be some other procedure whereby such important matters cannot suddenly be flung on the Table at the last minute. Hon. Members should have adequate warning that issues of such significance are about to be put before the House.

Can you, Madam Speaker, look into the background of this matter? If the procedures are not proper for matters of this significance, perhaps it would be possible for the Procedure Committee to look into them so that in future such matters do not come before the House with minimal notice at the last minute. Because you know so much more about these things than I do, Madam Speaker, may I ask whether we can debate the motion later this evening, or do we purely vote on it?

Madam Speaker: It is not a matter which can be debated later this evening. It has already been before the Statutory Instruments Committee in the normal way, but it is not on the Order Paper for debate this evening.

Mr. William Cash (Stafford): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. The matter is the subject of a dispute which is subject to appeal to the House of Lords. It would appear that this order is being rushed through while the matter is sub judice. Is it not a matter about which we should be concerned?

Madam Speaker: The sub judice rule does not apply to delegated legislation.

Ms Coffey: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. On 15 October a letter from the Secretary of State for Social Security was circulated to all right hon. and hon. Members which stated that it was not true that the Child Support Agency was concentrating primarily on those who were already paying some maintenance. However, I understand from reports in the press that the chief executive of the agency said exactly the opposite to the Select Committee on Social Security.

In view of the irreconcilable nature of these two statements, could you, Madam Speaker, use your good offices to ask the Minister to come to the House to reconcile them? I feel strongly that it is important for Members of the House to have accurate information, and we do rely on Ministers to give us that accurate information.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Lady is aware that I have no authority to require a Minister to come before the House and make a statement. I am given notice when a Minister wishes to do so. Of course, as the hon. Lady may be aware, and if she is not I will be happy to give her some guidance if she would like to come and see me, there are various other methods by which she herself can raise these matters in the House.

BILLS PRESENTED

Police (Amendment)

Mr. Tony Benn, supported by Ms Diane Abbott, Mr. Jeremy Corbyn, Mr. Bernie Grant, Mr. Bill Etherington, Mr. Joe Ashton, Mr. Alan Simpson, Mr. Eddie Loyden, Mr. Bill Michie, Ms Dawn Primarolo, Mr. Malcolm Chisholm and Mr. Ken Livingstone, presented a Bill to amend the Police Act 1964 so as to permit all members of any police force to belong to a trade union, and to allow the Police Federation to affiliate to the Trades Union Congress: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time tomorrow, and to be printed. [Bill 262.]

Value Added Tax (Democratic Control)

Mr. Tony Benn, supported by Ms Diane Abbott, Mr. Jeremy Corbyn, Mr. Bernie Grant, Mr. Bill Etherington, Mr. Dennis Skinner, Mr. Alan Simpson, Mr. Eddie Loyden, Mr. Bill Michie, Ms Dawn Primarolo, Mr. Malcolm Chisholm and Mr. Ken Livingstone, presented a Bill to amend the European Communities Act 1972 so as to restore to Parliament the sole legislative power to impose, amend, or repeal value added tax to be charged in the United Kingdom; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time tomorrow, and to be printed. [Bill 261.]

Pardon for Soldiers of the Great War (No. 2)

Mr. Andrew Mackinlay, supported by Mr. Peter Bottomley, Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody, Mr. Don Dixon, Mr. John Hume, Mr. Ken Maginnis, Rev. Ian Paisley, Mr. Allan Rogers, Mr. Alex Salmond, Sir David Steel, Mr. Dafydd Wigley and Mr. Paul Flynn, presented a Bill to provide for the granting of pardons to soldiers of the British Empire Forces executed during the Great War of 1914 to 1919 following conviction for offences of cowardice, desertion or attempted desertion, disobedience, quitting post, violence, sleeping at post, throwing away arms or striking a superior officer; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon Thursday 11 November, and to be printed. [Bill 265.]

Football Matches (Violent and Disorderly Conduct)

5.9 pm

Mr. David Amess (Basildon): I beg to move,

That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to the prevention of violence or disorder at or in connection with football matches played outside England and Wales; to amend the Football Spectators Act 1989; and for connected purposes.

I am a lifelong supporter of West Ham United, and since June 1983 I have been a supporter of Basildon United. Both, in their respective leagues, are the finest teams in the country. Unfortunately, occasionally they meet teams that play a little better than they do—but of course, those matches are always played in unfortunate circumstances. My household was delighted by West Ham's performance on Monday night, when we beat Manchester City. The passwords in our house are, "Up, you irons," and, "I'm for ever blowing bubbles."

I am an east ender, and it is appropriate that I support West Ham United, because when England won the world cup three West Ham players—Bobby Moore, Geoff Hurst and Martin Peters—scored all the goals. Those people were an inspiration to other young players in their behaviour both on and off the field. In more recent times, Trevor Brooking has also been an admirable ambassador for the British game of football.

I decided to ask the leave of the House to introduce this Bill because of my anger at the scenes that we saw on our television screens and in the newspapers at the time of the England versus Holland match. My Bill has nothing to do with football supporters or spectators. The idiots to whom I refer are so thick that they cannot even wait for us to lose a match before they riot. They have no interest whatever in the game of football; they have simply latched on to our national game as an opportunity for what they see as "having a good laugh". Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the two are somehow related in the minds of the general public.

We are all deeply saddened that we are now out of the world cup, that our national sport is still at a low ebb, with some players being paid too much money in return for poor skills, and that we have no settled English team. Now is the ideal time for us to take action on disorderly conduct at football matches. Lord Justice Taylor's report on the 1989 Hillsborough disaster said that there was no single remedy for hooligan behaviour. Those disgraceful individuals should be dealt with seriously, because of the shame that they bring on our country, on themselves and on their families. I presume that those people all have parents who love them, but if I had a son who behaved in that way I would string him up, and if I employed one of them—I assume that they are in work—I should not be at all happy about his staying in my employment.

I pay a warm tribute to the way in which the British game has been cleaned up, thanks to firm, decisive action. We are an example to other countries, and many people and organisations should take the credit for that—the football unit of the national criminal intelligence service, the Football Association, with its England unit travel club rules, the all-party football group and its chairman, and so on. The two 1991 reports of the Home Affairs Committee on policing football hooliganism, and other Select Committee reports, have made significant contributions. Media headlines on one day are soon forgotten, but the matter needs constant attention.

Hooliganism is certainly not confined to these islands. For instance, as we have seen on television today, it happens in Turkey. It is widespread throughout the world, so the thrust of any amending legislation should be reciprocal, and should take effect on a European basis. For my suggestions I am indebted for his support and guidance to the Opposition spokesman, the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde (Mr. Pendry), who wanted to be in the Chamber, but is at present doing an interview on the same subject for a television programme.

The passport scandal is an example of the complex difficulties of control. Some hooligans, instead of using their own passports, apply for British visitors passports under false names to avoid proper identification. The rules for issuing British visitors passports should be tightened to require a more rigorous examination of supporting documents. If fans using the FA travel club scheme had to present full British passports, their tickets and their club cards, that would help greatly.

I hope to ensure that some action is taken, building on our successes in this country so that Britain can lead the way. First, we should extend by statutory instrument or otherwise the powers under section 22 of the Football Spectators Act 1989. Only three times have statutory instruments extended the powers under section 22(1). Surely it is time for an extension to other countries. Regrettably, only 25 restriction orders have been issued by the courts since 1990, and most have now expired. That matter needs attention.

Secondly, we should lead by positive example, through the 1985 European convention on spectator violence and misbehaviour at sports events, especially football matches. Twenty-four countries are involved and, in the light of experience, a standing committee of the convention should review the provisions under article 9 more frequently. Our treatment of alcohol, the use of closed-circuit television inside grounds and mobile cameras outside, effective football units co-operating with one another, and local legislation giving the police emergency powers, will all greatly improve the situation, and will help to distinguish between innocent people and obvious offenders. That must all be done on a common reciprocal basis. We cannot be happy when the police authorities in other countries appear so restrained in their use of prosecution, finding it easier to ship suspected offenders as quickly as possible back to their home countries.

We have a great tradition of fair play in this country. We have always been seen as good losers—perhaps not wanting quite enough to win. There may be something in that. However, in the long term, no game could survive in a civilised society with the sort of nonsense that we have seen perpetrated by the mindless hooligans who have travelled abroad in recent years.

I hope that the all-party football group will wish to review the present position and to report its conclusions to the Home Office and to the Minister responsible for sport, so that appropriate action can be taken by a standing committee of the European convention. We cannot and should not stand by and allow our national game to be brought into disrepute by mindless thugs. The Bill will make a significant contribution to that end.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Amess, Mr. David Alton, Mr. John Carlisle, Mr. David Clelland, Mr. Tom Cox, Mr. David Evans, Mr. John Greenway, Mr. John Gunnell, Mr. Jim Lester, Ms Liz Lynne, Mr. Alan Meale and Mr. Nicholas Winterton.

FOOTBALL MATCHES (VIOLENT AND DISORDERLY CONDUCT)

Mr. David Amess accordingly presented a Bill to make further provision with respect to the prevention of violence or disorder at or in connection with football matches played outside England and Wales; to amend the Football Spectators Act 1989; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon Friday 5 November, and to be printed. [Bill 264.]

Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill (Allocation of Time)

5.19 pm

The Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. John Redwood): I beg to move,

That the Order of the House [27th October 1992] be supplemented as follows:

Lords Amendments

1. The proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments shall be completed at this day's sitting and, if not previously brought to a conclusion, shall be brought to a conclusion two hours after the commencement of the proceedings of this Order.

2.—(1) For the purpose of bringing any proceedings to a conclusion in accordance with paragraph 1 above—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided and, if that Question is for the amendment of a Lords Amendment, shall then put forthwith the Question on any further Amendment of the Lords Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown and on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in the Lords Amendment or, as the case may be, in the Lords Amendment as amended;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining Lords Amendments as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown to a Lords Amendment and then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in their Amendment or, as the case may be, in their Amendment as amended;

(ii) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in a Lords Amendment;

(iii) put forthwith with respect to the Amendments designated by the Speaker which have not been disposed of the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the Amendments; and

(iv) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Amendments;

(c) as soon as the House has agreed or disagreed with the Lords in any of their Amendments the Speaker shall put forthwith a separate Question on any other Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown relevant to the Lords Amendment.

(2) Proceedings under sub-paragraph (1) above shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

Stages subsequent to first Consideration of Lords Amendments

3. The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown for the consideration forthwith of any further Message from the Lords on the Bill.

4. The proceedings on any further Message from the Lords shall, if not previously brought to a conclusion, be brought to a conclusion one hour after the commencement of those proceedings.

5. For the purpose of bringing those proceedings to a conclusion—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided, and shall then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown which is related to the Question already proposed from the Chair;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining items in the Lords Message as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown on any item;

[Mr. John Redwood]

(ii) in the case of each remaining item designated by the Speaker, put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Proposal; and

(iii) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Proposals.

Supplemental

6.—(1) The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown for the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons.

(2) Such a Committee shall report before the conclusion of the sitting at which it is appointed.

7.—(1) In this paragraph "the proceedings" means proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments or on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill, on the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons and the Report of such a Committee.

(2) Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to the proceedings.

(3) No dilatory Motion with respect to, or in the course of, the proceedings shall be made except by a Minister of the Crown, and the Question on any such Motion shall be put forthwith.

(4) If the proceedings are interrupted by a Motion for the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 20 (Adjournment on specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration) a period equal to the duration of the proceedings on the Motion shall be added to the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion.

(5) If the House is adjourned, or the sitting is suspended, before the expiry of the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion, no notice shall be required of a Motion made at the next sitting by a Minister of the Crown for varying or supplementing the provisions of this Order.

The Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill has a long history all of its own. The original private Bill was introduced into another place five years ago this month. It was considered by a Select Committee of the other place for 13 days and received the usual Second and Third Readings. In this House it was debated for a total of twenty-five and a half hours. It was twice carried over into new parliamentary Sessions, and was finally considered for sixteen and a half hours in an all-night sitting in April 1991. It was considered for 27 sitting days by a Select Committee, including three days of evidence taken in Cardiff.

The present Bill was introduced two years ago tomorrow. Seldom can a Bill coming before the House for a Second Reading have been already so thoroughly debated and examined. This Bill has been debated even more thoroughly since. It was considered for 14 days by a Select Committee of this House, including three days in Cardiff. There were five sittings for the Standing Committee, lasting twelve and a half hours. Report and Third Reading lasted over 10 hours.

The two Bills together have had Second Reading after Second Reading and Committee day after Committee day of discussion. There are those who think it is challenging for a place in the "Guinness Book of Records" for the length of time its passage has taken.

The Bill has also been through another place, including 11 days before a Select Committee. It was not greatly amended there.

The time has come to bring consideration of this Bill to an end. The timetable motion provides for two more hours of discussion. In paragraph 2, the motion contains the usual provision for questions to be put at the end of the two-hour period.

Mr. Alun Michael (Cardiff, South and Penarth): The Secretary of State is correct to talk about the long time involved with this Bill. If he studies the history, he might agree that, if the Welsh Office had advised in the first place that it should be a hybrid Bill, as it is now, rather than a private Bill, a great deal of time and agony might have been saved for many of us.

The Secretary of State is talking about cutting the time allowed for these last amendments. Given that these are generally helpful and non-controversial amendments, it seems rather odd that he should be introducing a guillotine at this stage.

Mr. Redwood: If the amendments are non-controversial and helpful, it will not take more than two hours to deal with them in a sensible way.

It is decision time for the House, and decision time for Cardiff.

I pay tribute to my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the unflagging energy that he has put into this project. He will be handling the remaining stages with his usual skill and great knowledge of the subject.

Everything about the barrage and the bay proposals has been extensively debated. This House has heard how the rising water table will be handled, how transport will be organised and how development should follow the project. The Bill is eagerly awaited by the construction industry and by many in Cardiff. Its final passage tonight represents the go-ahead for a large civil engineering project, a green light for the bay development, a landmark in the history of Cardiff. The development corporation will ensure that the city is once again linked to the bay properly, and that the old docks areas will again become commercial centres, bustling with a new kind of trade.

I want to see Cardiff reunited, with its waterfront thrusting ahead with new investments in its business district, and proud of its bay-led development. The bay development will help Cardiff to retain its critical role in the business of Wales. In five years' time, people will look across the bay from Penarth and wonder how Members in this House could have stood in the way of regeneration for so long.

A new maritime city for the next millennium, a symbol of all that is best in Welsh enterprise, architecture and environment, will be constructed. It will be a celebration of the best of Wales, a symbol that the best of Wales is world class. I urge the House not to stay the bulldozers longer. I urge hon. Members to support the motion.

5.24 pm

Mr. Rhodri Morgan (Cardiff, West): The Secretary of State has just given his Third Reading speech. He has issued a clarion call for getting on with the job and not standing in the way of the bulldozers. As my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth (Mr. Michael) has correctly pointed out, the problem is that the Secretary of State has not explained what the timetable motion has to do with the content of his mini-speech.

After all, it has taken six years to get this far with the Bill and it is difficult to see why an hour or so either way will make very much difference. If a Bill has taken longer than world war 2 to get to this stage, a guillotine hardly seems appropriate. We are discussing Lords amendments, not the Third Reading.

The Secretary of State is right to point to the fact that the Bill has a long and tangled history—in fact, he omitted one part of it. It first entered their Lordships' House in November 1987, not November 1988, and was withdrawn.

Perhaps the lesson that we can learn from this Bill is that, if one does one's homework, any Bill, whatever the objections to it, will have a much cleaner and smoother passage through the House.

The homework was not done on this Bill, and its tangled history saw the two Under-Secretaries of State before the present incumbent—Ian Grist and Nicholas Bennett—lose their seats in the last general election. We may have the triple crown of Under-Secretaries of State, in that the present Minister may also lose his seat after his association with the Bill.

We are dealing with what might be called legislative coitus interruptus on a monumental scale. The Secretary of State has said that he does not believe that the Bill's sell-by date has been exceeded. However, the Bill was conceived in the boom conditions of November 1987 and, six years later, it is just reaching its final proceedings in the Hosue. If it ever was the answer to Cardiff's problems, is that still the case?

We object to the timetable motion, not only because we cannot see the point of a guillotine on Lords amendments, but because of the precedent of a guillotine on a hybrid Bill with this unique history. It is unprecedented to have a hybrid Bill that is six years old—if we include the three previous versions—and to have a guillotine on Lords amendments to a Bill that has been carried over not only from one House to another and one year to another but from one general election to another. That is the problem that we are facing in trying to find a way in which the Secretary of State can justify the timetable motion.

There is not a vast number of Lords amendments, but they do require unrestricted debate. The Government will be well aware from events in another place already tonight that, when they mess about with Lords amendments and guillotine them in this place, nasty accidents sometimes happen. It is much better to allow Parliament to have unfettered debate, because if it does not, Bills can become accident-prone.

The Bill was given a Second Reading two years ago, and when a Bill is given a Second Reading, the principle contained in it is established. A problem arises, as in this case, when a Bill is altered in the other place and this House has no opportunity to consider it in its proper form.

The House did not have that opportunity, because it was rushed into Second Reading before the groundwater studies had been completed. It is a generally accepted constitutional convention that, following Second Reading, the principle of the Bill cannot be opposed. That establishes the principle, and binds the hands of the National Rivers Authority and of the Countryside Council for Wales.

When the Bill is altered in another place, that constitutional principle is undermined, because it means that one is now looking at a package different from that considered at Second Reading. It is fair to say—I am sure that many of my hon. Friends and the Secretary of State and the Under-Secretary would agree—that the changes which have been made in another place undoubtedly provide improved protection against potential damage.

However, we did not have a chance to consider the complete package properly on Second Reading. I am arguing for an unrestricted debate tonight, because a fundamental constitutional principle could be undermined. Following Second Reading—after which the principle of the Bill cannot be discussed—the House should have a proper chance to discuss the consequences for farm and livestock and for individuals, as well what appears in the Bill.

The same applies to the rights of petitioners, which have been considerably abridged by the omission of a matter under new clause 22, which I may come to later in the debate. I see that the Minister is shaking his head. Obviously, the reason for that is his own tangled involvement with clause 22. He denied that the clause would re-hybridise the Bill when I directly put it to him in the Standing Committee. Does the hon. Gentleman wish to challenge me on that? *[Interruption.]*

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order. If the hon. Member wishes to intervene, he should seek to do so.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. Gwilym Jones): The hon. Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) is completely incorrect in his assumption. The specific question was not raised. The hon. Gentleman has misinterpreted the matter previously, and he ought to know by now that his interpretation is wrong.

We fully acknowledge, and we have done so throughout, that the amendment to which he refers now re-hybridises the Bill. It has been treated as such. There has been an opportunity for anyone to petition against it. It has been fully advertised, and I do not know why he persists with the point.

Mr. Morgan: In saying that I am wrong, the Under-Secretary is denying what is in the record of the Standing Committee. Reference was made to the matter in Committee on 17 May, and I questioned the hon. Gentleman in Standing Committee in July 1992. I asked whether he accepted that the amendment would, in effect, re-hybridise the Bill. The hon. Gentleman replied that it would not, and he urged the Committee not to pursue the amendment.

The Minister will be aware that the Chairman of the Select Committee—now the Chairman of the Defence Select Committee—said that the matter should be put right in Standing Committee or in another place. The matter was dealt with in another place, but when I put it to him in the Standing Committee in July 1992, he denied that the effect of the amendment would be to re-hybridise the Bill.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The amendment that we were debating when the hon. Gentleman raised the question in Committee did not re-hybridise the Bill. It is the land drainage amendment that has re-hybridised it.

Mr. Morgan: I am terribly sorry that the Minister has not grasped the fact that land drainage amendment was the one that we were referring to in July 1992 in implementing the recommendations of the Select Committee.

That is the type of problem we face. The rights of petitioners should have been clear to all potential petitioners whose private property rights would be affected. The Conservative party often claims, falsely, to be the only party that looks after private property owners. The rights of those petitioners were affected by the fact that it was not clear whether their properties would be affected at the time of Second Reading and when the Bill was advertised, two years ago tomorrow. That matter was affected later in the Lords, but petitioners did not have a chance to petition both Houses of Parliament.

[Mr. Morgan]

If the Bill had been delayed for another two months, from November 1991 to January 1992, and if the Secretary of State's groundwater adviser had completed his report, the job could have been done properly. The House would then have had the opportunity, which has now been lost, to debate the implications of the Bill for petitioners.

We could also have debated the problems that can be caused to the occupants of property in the affected areas in my constituency and in the constituencies of my hon. Friends the Members for Cardiff, South and Penarth and for Cardiff, Central (Mr. Jones) from rising groundwater that would be occasioned by the barrage.

That is the problem we have, and that is why an unrestricted debate on a relatively small group of Lords amendments would make far more sense. I feel that the rule that the principle of a Bill cannot be amended after Second Reading has been fundamentally undermined, in particular by the attitude of the Minister. He did not accept the offer that was made to incorporate the matter on the advice of the Chairman of the Select Committee when it was raised in Standing Committee in July last year.

As late as 2 August this year, new material was still coming to light that would require examination in the light of the Secretary of State's ringing comments tonight. I may have an opportunity later tonight to refer to the impact of the EC urban waste water directive which comes into effect shortly and will massively affect the way in which the waters of the Taff and the Ely are to be treated. The habitats directive which will be introduced on 5 June next year will also have a massive effect on the way in which nature conservation objections have to be looked at.

A European Court of Justice ruling on the Santona marshes case—a case fairly similar to Cardiff bay—in the matter of proposed special protection areas raises new issues which we have not had an opportunity to look at. That is why I say that a hybrid Bill should not be guillotined. Above all, a re-hybridised Bill should not be guillotined when it has come back from another place with those amendments which re-hybridise the Bill to this House, because hon. Members never had a chance to look at the amendments properly.

The House has not had the chance to look at the powers to go into people's back gardens and dig agricultural land drainage trenches, which have never before been tried in a densely populated area of terraced houses.

Obviously, the powers to get rid of the saturation flooding which is now a danger have been improved. There are amendments covering that subject to which I will refer in a moment. My objection to a timetable is this: why should we restrict a debate on a question that relates to unprecedented engineering works in a densely populated terrace area? That is no problem in sports grounds or in agricultural areas. However, digging under people's back gardens, their favourite goldfish ponds, rockeries, tool sheds and back walls has never been tried before. That should have been properly aired tonight.

The House is on dangerous ground if it allows a guillotine that has never been used before for hybrid Bills. Potential petitioners on future Bills will feel that their rights have been abridged if they are able to petition only one House and not the other. Hon. Members were not presented with a proper package on Second Reading, because at that time we did not know what the groundwater side effects were.

I will refer to the November 1987 private Bill, which I also referred to earlier in connection with the Secretary of State. Let us assume that the Bill had made great progress in the House, or had started in the Lords before coming to this House. The Bill did not refer to groundwater side effects at all, because work had not been completed.

Let us say that the Government had wanted to get the Bill into the Lords, where it would have been whistled through, with no reference to groundwater side effects. The Bill would have come to this House by the time the initial studies into groundwater had been done by Wallace Evans and Partners. Hon. Members would have said, "My goodness me, 6,000 families may now have their rightful ability peacefully to occupy their houses without groundwater side effects." We did not have an opportunity to consider the Bill's implications on Second Reading in this House because the engineering work had not been completed. We would have been scandalised to learn that 6,000 residents of downtown Cardiff were not to have an opportunity to petition this House when the Bill began its parliamentary process because the corporation had not completed the engineering work.

Because the engineering work was completed late, it was not apparent on Second Reading that there would be massive groundwater side effects across the flat lands around downtown Cardiff. Those effects were discovered when the Bill went to another place. Therefore, the Bill was amended accordingly there, and a pack of amendments were sent back to this House. In effect, those amendments say, "Sorry, we didn't know that there were groundwater side effects when the House of Commons gave the Bill a Second Reading."

Because of the delays with the Bill, we are not facing such a gross abuse of parliamentary procedure. However, we are facing an abuse of parliamentary procedure. The Bill was rushed through this place. If it had been left until January 1992, all the new measures could have been incorporated. However, although it was clear that the groundwater studies would be completed within two months, Second Reading took place in November 1991. That meant that the House of Commons and petitioners could not, on Second Reading, consider the total package.

I have already referred to the first Bill, which appeared in 1987. It is clearly important for us not to curtail debate when petitioners' rights are being undermined and when these problems were not apparent when this House gave the Bill a Second Reading.

On that occasion, there was no reference to the need for an extension of land drainage legislation powers to enable the city council to enter people's backyards to cope with the effects of saturation flooding. That possibility should have been apparent to us on Second Reading. Because it was not, there must be great doubts about the validity of the process by which we will consider the Lords amendments which attempt to correct the defects in the Bill that we considered on Second Reading. That is a strong case for unrestricted debate and against the guillotine as the correct way to proceed.

The Under-Secretary of State the hon. Member for Cardiff, North (Mr. Jones), will no doubt explain later why he opposed the original Bill about the Taff crossing. That little barrage was proposed by a Labour-controlled county council. The hon. Gentleman was against that. He will no

doubt explain how he came to change his mind, and became a super-salesman for a large barrage proposed by a Tory Government. No doubt he will be able to explain why his predecessor and the Secretary of State's predecessor were also very much against the Usk barrage and very much in favour of the Cardiff bay barrage. Also——

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. Before the hon. Gentleman goes any further, how does this historical sketch relate to the guillotine motion before us?

Mr. Morgan: A great deal more than the Secretary of State's speech, but perhaps we should consider that tomorrow in the full light of day.

The need for uncompressed debate on the Lords amendments, without a guillotine, is clear. The scene is changing very quickly in Cardiff, and new factors are coming to light. Many of those factors are covered by the amendments and can be discussed in detail. However, some are not.

The Secretary of State hardly referred to the Lords amendments. He maintained that lakes create jobs and he did not want the lake to be delayed as he believed that it would create jobs. That is why he wants to introduce a guillotine motion. I believe that we should consider whether lakes create jobs. We should consider this new voodoo religion about lakes and jobs. No doubt the Minister will be able to justify that when he debates the amendments.

However, the Secretary of State maintained that speed was of the utmost importance. He said that we must get on with the job and set a starting date for the bulldozers to get in.

Mr. Redwood *rose*——

Mr. Morgan: Perhaps the Secretary of State wants to start his bulldozer up tonight.

Mr. Redwood: I confined my remarks to the guillotine motion and to whether we should make a decision in good time tonight. I argued strongly that we should do that. I did not discuss the amendments, because that is what we will do next. My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State and the hon. Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) will be able to discuss the amendments later. If the hon. Gentleman got on with the job, we would have more time to discuss the Lords amendments. I believe that that would be the best thing to do in the circumstances.

Mr. Morgan: I am not sure what the Secretary of State is trying to say. He wants to start the procedure for building the barrage as though that would happen tomorrow if we approve the guillotine motion tonight. Whether or not we approve the guillotine motion has no bearing on the start date for the barrage.

We want to raise many points as a result of the concerns that have been expressed. Some of those points will be dealt with later. The Secretary of State should realise that the way in which the Bill has meandered its way through both Houses of Parliament is the result of the Government's inability to do their homework before presenting the Bill to the House. That is why there are Lords amendments.

Most of the Lords amendments stem from the Government, at the request of the local authorities and some objectors. Therefore, some of those amendments must be debated tonight. Should we curtail debate on those amendments when they relate to the protection of ordinary residents of downtown Cardiff, many of whom are in my constituency and in the other two Cardiff constituencies which are affected? That is a strong argument against the guillotine motion, and that is why we will oppose it tonight.

5.45 pm

Mr. Alun Michael (Cardiff, South and Penarth): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak in this debate and to agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) that the guillotine motion is wholly unnecessary. If it is necessary for me to do so, I remind the House that the whole of the Cardiff bay development area lies in my constituency. That is why I have taken a particular interest in this measure in its various forms and why I acted as sponsor for the Bill when it was a private Bill in this House.

The guillotine is unnecessary, for a very simple reason. All we have to deal with is Lords amendments, which are largely beneficial. There are some exploratory amendments to the Lords amendments, and it is right that they should be discussed and that we should ensure that, in the narrow area covered by the Lords amendments, this House gets it right.

The Bill is important to my constituency because it is likely greatly to improve the environment of south Cardiff. Since the last century, south Cardiff has suffered from the dirt and the impact of heavy industry as a result of the export of coal. It has been left with the detritus of heavy industry as our coal and steel industries have closed down, as the transport industry has diminished and as heavy industry generally has receded from the southern part of the city. That is a matter of grave concern. While my constituents have suffered that dirt and disruption, the jobs on which so many of them depended for a decent standard of living have also receded.

The Bill will do a great deal to improve the situation. It will create an environment in which it will be far more pleasant for people to live. It will also bring back jobs to south Cardiff, which used to be the powerhouse of the city and of south Wales. The interdependence of Cardiff and the valleys of south Wales is as relevant today as it has been over the decades.

Mr. Donald Anderson (Swansea, East): My hon. Friend is making interesting points, and I fully respect his knowledge of the issue. However, is he not talking more in terms of the glossy brochures than the reality, which is that the market conditions are currently extremely flat? There is little or no prospect of property developers taking up the opportunities and challenges.

Although the proposal may be wonderful, it may be a prospect of a rather distant future. It is certainly more distant than when the Bill began its passage, which will be so abruptly and brutally curtailed by the guillotine motion. I can think of no better example of the arrogance of power than the way in which the Government are curtailing tonight's debate.

Mr. Michael: Interestingly, my hon. Friend brings me precisely to the point that I was about to make before his intervention. The delays that have taken place do not concern me greatly, because, if the Bill had been passed more quickly, pressure for building and the sale of land

[Mr. Michael]

would have begun in the depths of the recession, so the project would not have returned its value either to the public purse or the city of Cardiff.

However, it is important that the barrage should now proceed as quickly as possible so that the opportunities can be taken. Over the past week, NCM has laid the foundation stone of its new premises, which I very much welcome. Further delay would be foolish, and might mean that we would miss the boat for some opportunity. My hon. Friend the Member for Swansea, East is right to say that, because of the recession, nothing has been lost by the delay.

There is no need for a guillotine motion, because the principles of the Bill have been dealt with exhaustively. The Bill has passed the exhaustive tests to which it was put during its passage through the House, and it has passed tests from outside. The principles are not before us today. Instead, we face a series of amendments that I would describe as fairly minor, but helpful. There was no need for the Government to take the draconian measure of a guillotine when we need to debate, explore and get right certain aspects of the Bill. Debating the guillotine motion is preventing us from debating the amendments.

One of the important factors that should be recognised is the capacity that Cardiff has and always has had to achieve partnership such as that between local authorities and the private sector that enabled the enormously successful redevelopment of the centre of Cardiff in the 1970s, in which the Under-Secretary of State for Wales and I were involved in our previous capacities as members of Cardiff city council. That opportunity for partnership also exists with the barrage.

In the run-up to the general election, my right hon. Friend the Member for Islwyn (Mr. Kinnock) made it clear that there is no cross-party division on the principle of the barrage. One understands the reservations expressed earlier by my hon. Friends who represent some of the valleys constituencies, and especially by my next-door neighbour, my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan), but we should recall that a vision across the political divide has led us to where we are today.

The vision of the Labour local authority, led at that time by Lord Brooks of Tremorfa, and that of the Secretary of State at that time, now Lord Crickhowell, brought together the combination of forces that began the process—initially, it was a private Bill. We should pay tribute to that vision.

The intervention of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea, East encourages me to be brief. The guillotine procedure means that we have a maximum of two hours debate, which includes the time that is taken to debate the guillotine. The briefer we are in debating the guillotine, the longer we have to debate the amendments.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member is absolutely right: the longer we spend on the guillotine, the less time we have to debate the amendments.

Mr. Michael: I am grateful for that confirmation, Madam Deputy Speaker. For that reason, I shall draw my remarks to a close.

I am as eager to discuss the amendments to the Lords amendments as my hon. Friends who have tabled them. Had the Government not chosen to table a guillotine motion, we would be debating the Lords amendments already—that was an error on their part.

I hope very much that we shall now be able to dispose of the guillotine motion speedily, whether by passing it or by the Government withdrawing it—it matters little. The Lords amendments are largely beneficial, and it is important that my hon. Friends should be able to make whatever exploration they wish. It is right that the amendments are phrased properly to address the issues correctly, to ensure that the legislation is as good as possible.

Across the parties, we should speed the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill on its way, so that construction can begin, the environment for my constituents can improve, and their hope for jobs and an enhanced standard of income is realised. That is why I have supported the Bill from its earliest days, and why many hon. Members of both parties have supported its principles, as have my predecessor Lord Callaghan and others in another place.

5.56 pm

Mr. Ted Rowlands (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney): I approached the debate with a certain mellow resignation. Like other hon. Members who are veterans of the Bill, I have grown old during its passage. I was middle-aged when the Bill was introduced, and have become progressively mature.

That mellow resignation lasted until I heard the speech made by the Secretary of State. He said that perhaps hon. Members were trying to get an entry into "The Guinness Book of Records" for the time that the Bill has taken. The Secretary of State was clearly trying to break another record: cramming in as many banal buzz words to a square inch of *Hansard* as possible. All we heard from the Secretary of State was a series of banal buzz words about the scheme. As he has all the zealotry of a person who has only recently discovered the location of Cardiff bay, I ought to respond to some of his points.

Mr. Morgan: Was the Secretary of State saying that, if the barrage were built, he would agree to spend one night there during his tenure of office?

Mr. Rowlands: I am concerned that the Secretary of State should spend as much time as he can finding out the true economic and industrial needs of the nation, not only of Cardiff but of the communities that I represent.

The Secretary of State's observations exhibited the repeated belief that somehow the marina and the barrage will be the great regenerators of the economy—apparently not only in Cardiff, but, as my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth (Mr. Michael) said, the whole of south Wales.

My hon. Friend rightly said that, curiously, as a result of the prolonged scrutiny of the Bill, an amazing transformation has taken place over the past five or six years. My hon. Friends the Members for Cardiff, South and Penarth and for Swansea, East (Mr. Anderson) have said that, when the Bill started out, marinas and barrages were the buzz schemes of the day—that is, they were part and parcel of the ethos of mid-1980s Thatcherism, that the world was all about leisure services, and that that was the economic future which involved the creation of jobs.

In the past five or six years, the bubble—the concept that the future development of great cities such as Cardiff lay in leisure complexes, theme parks and the notion that

that, together with property inflation, would somehow regenerate the economy—has burst. In some ways, it is fortunate that we have seen the coming and going of a fad.

Mr. Anderson: Perhaps I should declare an interest. I live in the Swansea marina, alongside the Swansea barrage. Perhaps my hon. Friend will reflect that, during the period that the Bill has been going through the House, the Swansea barrage was built, and that no barrage, wherever it is sited, will stimulate job development if there is flatness in the economy and in the property market. Although barrages can provide a basis, an infrastructure or a possibility, much more than that is required for the jobs to come.

Mr. Rowlands: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. The simple conclusion to draw from the concept of economy-derived services is that there must be other jobs creating income to spend on those leisure services. It is not a matter of creating wealth: the question is on what one spends the wealth that has already been created.

The assumption behind many schemes, of which Cardiff bay barrage is a glorious example, was that they would somehow regenerate the economy not only of Cardiff but, apparently, of the whole of south Wales. In the five years in which we have been debating the Bill, that argument has been well and truly punctured. Thankfully, the 1990s will not be about barrages and marinas: they will be about manufacturing and industrial economic regeneration, which will generate money to spend on certain leisure activities. Such schemes are not real generators of economic development.

The bubble has also burst in property and property inflation. From the start, the scheme was based upon an assumption about property inflation—that is, that one could not go wrong if one invested in property such as office blocks or high-class appartments and if one was surrounded by bobbing yachts and harbour development, because property inflation would justify such a scheme. In the past five years, fortunately—this is why I will not support the motion—we have seen that bubble burst, too.

The interventions by my hon. Friends the Members for Cardiff, South and Penarth and for Swansea, East were well illustrated. My hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth understandably said that it is perhaps fortunate that there has been a modest delay, because Cardiff bay will now catch the tide of economic revival, and that delays have not been too costly, because there has been a recession, but he has not recognised that it is not a temporary shift in the property market. I hope that it is a sea change in attitude to property, the value of property and inflation as an economic regenerator.

I hope that, in the 1990s, we will not chase huge property profits, and that we have got that attitude out of our system. The rest of the world did not follow that attitude—except, possibly, Japan, and it is now running into problems as a result. We have to ram home the message that the scheme was based upon property inflation way above normal rates of inflation. The Government preach zero inflation. With zero property inflation, the schemes that we have been asked to endorse have no future.

Mr. Anderson: It would be very difficult to submit that another property boom is just around the corner or that there are green shoots or blue shoots. Bearing in mind the housing market, with its overhangs and repossessions, and the office market, with its tremendous over-capacity, it is very unlikely that there will be anything like a recurrence as far ahead as property people can usefully plan. Does my hon. Friend agree that the only people who were certain to benefit from the development were the property developers, and that even their benefit might now be in doubt?

Mr. Rowlands: My hon. Friend is right. I hope that we have got property inflation out of our system. It was the only basis of the mid-1980s boom. When the bubble burst, the boom burst with it. Also, there was the notion that, with many office blocks being built, there would be many jobs. As we have pointed out many times in the past five years, they are only assumptions about jobs, not actual jobs.

It was assumed that, if one built an office block and divided it into the number of jobs that one could put into it, one would create that number of jobs. Some office blocks could lie empty. Scattered around the country, as a result of alterations in the economy and the coming of office technology, we will find a different attitude to job creation in the world of office development.

Dr. Kim Howells (Pontypridd): Does my hon. Friend consider it ironic that, in June, across the channel from Cardiff, Avonmouth docks took its first 100,000 tonnes of coal to displace Welsh coal, and that, although we see a very welcome development on the Cardiff foreshore, on the other side of the channel we have seen real, well-paid jobs literally being exported?

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. Hon. Members will be aware that we are supposed to be debating the guillotine motion.

Mr. Rowlands: I do not know whether you were in the Chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth based his discussion of the guillotine motion on the fact that the development was required because of the dust and noise created by the coal industry in the valleys in the 19th century, and that it was part and parcel of clearing away that tradition and history. My hon. Friend was referring to that tradition, which——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I think that I have heard more about the Cardiff bay barrage than almost anyone except Members who are present, so I am well briefed on it.

Mr. Rowlands: I know that you are well briefed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was pointing out the relationship between the observation by my hon. Friend the Member for Pontypridd (Dr. Howells) and the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth.

From the start, I have been concerned about pre-emption of the public expenditure involved. It was first estimated that the barrage would cost £45 million, in the late 1980s it was costed at £85 million, and I understand that it is now estimated to cost more than £150 million. I hope that, before the night is out, the Minister will tell us what the cost is. We have seen a massive escalation in the public cost of the scheme, and it cannot be attributed only to inflation. The cost has exploded in the past five years, and so has barrage-related expenditure. We are talking about another £450 million to £500 million.

I should like to draw hon. Members' attention to one part of that expenditure. Although not directly related to

[Mr. Rowlands]

the barrage itself, there is a scheme for one and a quarter miles of road, including a tunnel and a bridge, which will cost £135 million. That is the last estimate that I have received. For £135 million, the heads of the valleys road could be made into a dual carriageway.

One can argue about public expenditure, and my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth, with whom I have disagreed and argued on that matter, has often justified it, but the simple point is that a mile and a quarter of road, which is an integral and intrinsic part of the scheme to make the south of Cardiff and the Cardiff bay barrage more attractive, is costing £135 million. It is one of the most expensive roads ever to be built in Britain.

My hon. Friend will say that that mile and a quarter of road is vital to the development of Cardiff, South. If an equivalent amount was spent on the heads of the valleys road, it would have enormous economic regenerative consequences. Fifty per cent. of that money is coming out of the same budget for which we compete with other roads.

Mr. Michael: My hon. Friend is wrong. In referring to the Butetown area through which that road passes, he is talking about one of the most deprived communities in Britain—a community that has suffered all the worst effects of the old heavy industry and its replacement. The cut and cover does not so much help the economic regeneration of the area as stop that deprived community being cut in half, which would have been the result of the road going through without the cut and cover. Whereas I bow to my hon. Friend's expertise in regard to the finance of any issue, the community-based nature of that part of the development is absolute. I hope that he will recognise that.

Mr. Rowlands: Nothing can be absolute, everything is relative, but I recognise the significance, importance and value of that road to my hon. Friend and his constituents. I was merely drawing to his attention what the equivalent amount of public money could do in another community, and the regenerative consequences and potential of spending that amount of money—or at least half of it, because half of it would come from South Glamorgan, the other half from the Welsh Office.

From the start of my contributions to the debates, I have concentrated on one issue—the nature of the costs. I was once accused of being a one-man Public Accounts Committee on the Bill. I therefore end as I began five years ago, by saying that, when the Minister replies, I hope that he will give us the latest estimates of the relative costs on which we have challenged him during the past five years of discussions on the Bill.

6.12 pm

Mr. Walter Sweeney (Vale of Glamorgan): Unlike you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not been privileged to listen to debates on the subject of the Cardiff Bay barrage since November 1987. But I have been here long enough to notice a certain lack of harmony on the Opposition Front Bench on that topic.

It was particularly interesting to hear the hon. Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) expatiating at his usual length on every conceivable aspect of the Bill other than the guillotine motion, raking up the past and going right back to November 1987, and doing so in his usual rambling and disconnected manner. It was interesting also to contrast that with the enthusiastic attitude displayed by the hon. Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth (Mr. Michael), who has always demonstrated a positive attitude towards the barrage.

Mr. Michael: I ask the hon. Gentleman not to try to cause division between me and my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan). The hon. Gentleman will not succeed in that effort. By insulting my hon. Friend, all he is doing is taking up time that we could use to debate the Lords amendments.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I hope that we are not yet debating the Lords amendments; we are still debating the guillotine motion—as I keep re-emphasising.

Mr. Sweeney: The hon. Gentleman has failed to dissuade the House from what is clearly obvious, that there is a conflict between him and the hon. Member for Cardiff, West. Nobody could be blind to that.

I have sympathy with the hon. Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth about his support for the barrage, but I cannot see the logic in his remarks against the guillotine this evening. Quite plainly, it would be in the interests of those who want to get on with debating the substance of the matter were the debate on the guillotine motion to be cut short so that we would then have more time to debate the Lords amendments.

Mr. Michael: Perhaps I can spell it out to the hon. Gentleman. If he sits down now, and we finish the debate on the guillotine, we shall be able to debate the Lords amendments. The hon. Gentleman is preventing us from doing so.

Mr. Sweeney: The hon. Gentleman does not seem to realise that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. He has had his say on whether we should proceed to a guillotine on that important matter, and I believe that I should also have that right.

It is always illuminating to see such conflicts on the Labour Front Bench on this topic. In my brief period here, I cannot recall any other issue that has led to a more relentless flow of disconnected verbiage from the hon. Member for Cardiff, West.

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): Does my hon. Friend agree that, although we hear a great deal about guillotine motions and how undemocratic and difficult they are, when the Labour party was in power, the Leader of the Opposition himself was always willing to use the power of the guillotine, as he did on devolution? Does my hon. Friend wish to make any comment on the general balance of opinion within the Labour party as to which is the best approach?

Mr. Sweeney: My hon. Friend makes a sensible point. It is interesting that, when a guillotine motion is debated, the Labour party chooses to ignore its own record on similar occasions in the past.

The Cardiff Bay barrage has already had an ample airing, both in the House and in another place. The delay in moving forward, as the hon. Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth has quite rightly pointed out, may have worked to our advantage, in that we have come to the end of the recession, land prices are beginning to rise, and this is an excellent time to move forward.

With the benefit of hindsight, I accept that, as the hon. Member for Cardiff South and Penarth has said, there may

be some benefit from the delay. That does not justify us in further delay on that matter today. Clearly, we have reached a stage in our deliberations at which my right hon. Friend is fully justified in urging the House to proceed as expeditiously as possible with the debate.

It is interesting that not only is there a conflict between——

It being one hour after the commencement of proceedings on the motion, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *proceeded to put forthwith the Question necessary to dispose of them, pursuant to order [27 October 1992].*

Question agreed to.

Resolved,

That the Order of the House [27th October 1992] be supplemented as follows:

Lords Amendments

1. The proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments shall be completed at this day's sitting and, if not previously brought to a conclusion, shall be brought to a conclusion two hours after the commencement of the proceedings on this Order.

2. —(1) For the purpose of bringing any proceedings to a conclusion in accordance with paragraph 1 above—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided and, if that Question is for the amendment of a Lords Amendment, shall then put forthwith the Question on any further Amendment of the Lords Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown and on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in the Lords Amendment or, as the case may be, in the Lords Amendment as amended;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining Lords Amendments as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown to a Lords Amendment and then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in their Amendment or, as the case may be, in their Amendment as amended;

(ii) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in a Lords Amendment;

(iii) put forthwith with respect to the Amendments designated by the Speaker which have not been disposed of the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the Amendments; and

(iv) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Amendments;

(c) as soon as the House has agreed or disagreed with the Lords in any of their Amendments the Speaker shall put forthwith a separate Question on any other Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown relevant to the Lords Amendment.

(2) Proceedings under sub-paragraph (1) above shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

Stages subsequent to first Consideration of Lords Amendments

3. The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown for the consideration forthwith of any further Message from the Lords on the Bill.

4. The proceedings on any further Message from the Lords shall, if not previously brought to a conclusion, be brought to a conclusion one hour after the commencement of those proceedings.

5. For the purpose of bringing those proceedings to a conclusion—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided, and shall then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown which is related to the Question already proposed from the Chair;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining items in the Lords Message as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown on any item;

(ii) in the case of each remaining item designated by the Speaker, put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Proposal; and

(iii) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Proposals.

Supplemental

6.—(1) The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown for the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons.

(2) Such a Committee shall report before the conclusion of the sitting at which it is appointed.

7.—(1) In this paragraph "the proceedings" means proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments or on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill, on the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons and the Report of such a Committee.

(2) Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to the proceedings.

(3) No dilatory Motion with respect to, or in the course of, the proceedings shall be made except by a Minister of the Crown, and the Question on any such Motion shall be put forthwith.

(4) If the proceedings are interrupted by a Motion for the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 20 (Adjournment on specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration) a period equal to the duration of the proceedings on the Motion shall be added to the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion.

(5) If the House is adjourned, or the sitting is suspended, before the expiry of the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion, no notice shall be required of a Motion made at the next sitting by a Minister of the Crown for varying or supplementing the provisions of this Order.

Mr. Heald: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Is it in order for Labour Members to argue strenuously and vehemently for the guillotine motion to be defeated and then not to call a vote on it?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Everything has been in order so far.

Mr. Allan Rogers (Rhondda): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To make it absolutely clear to the hon. Member for Hertfordshire, North (Mr. Heald), we are not anxious to delay the proceedings unnecessarily by causing a vote to take place. We want the remaining hour so that we can debate the Lords amendments.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Orders of the Day

Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill

Lords amendments considered.

Clause 13

USE BY VESSELS AND FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES

Lords amendment: No. 1, in page 7, line 25, at end insert—

("(1A) In managing the outer harbour the Development Corporation shall secure that it is at all times available for use by pleasure craft and other vessels which—

(a) are about to pass to, or have recently passed from, the inland bay, or

(b) need to use it as a harbour of refuge.")

Read a Second time.

6.22 pm

Mr. Rhodri Morgan (Cardiff, West): I beg to move, as an amendment to the Lords amendment, amendment (a), at end add—

'and may recover reasonable costs so incurred from Associated British Ports.'.

I am grateful to have this opportunity to move an amendment to a Lords amendment. It is a rare parliamentary life form that I have not had to deal with from the Front Bench until now. It is an added pleasure to extend one's experiences in this regard.

First, I shall explain the purpose of the Lords amendment that we are seeking to amend. The Lords amendment—I am sure that the Minister will explain this in a few moments—covers the purposes to which the water area immediately outside the barrage can be put.

The reason why the Lords amendment has been tabled relatively late in the day is that the outer harbour is a late addition to the design of the barrage. It represents the culmination of a lengthy process of lobbying and negotiations with various yachting and sailing interests in the south Wales area—in Penarth and Cardiff. Many of my constituents enjoy sailing in the area and, obviously, they do not want their ability to sail to be abridged in any way by the barrage. The barrage will create some problems through the locking. However, there will be some gains as well as problems.

Rather than simply look at the barrage as a wall across the two estuaries of the Taff and the Ely—one had to pass by a lock—it was decided that an outer harbour should be built outside the barrage. The Lords amendment relates to the addition of the outer harbour, and extends the management responsibilities of the development corporation with regard to the outer harbour. The problem with that—we are seeking to deal with this in our amendment to the Lords amendment—is that the open water is basically the shipping channel.

We are not now dealing with the so-called inland bay, which was the obsession and on which we spent many days and hundreds of hours of debate. When one is in the Bristol channel, one is outside the lock and near commercial shipping lanes. Those shipping lanes are always a matter of considerable conflict between yachting interests and commercial shipping interests. In this case, commercial shipping interests are those who are making their way in or out of the Cardiff docks. Now that we are dealing with not the inland bay or the structure of the barrage but the add-on immediately outside, we must be sure that we have a fair partition of the costs that could arise between the commercial operation of Associated British Ports and the Cardiff Bay development corporation.

Mr. Alun Michael (Cardiff, South and Penarth): In this amendment, I think that my hon. Friend is trying to find a means of recovering finance for the operation of the development corporation. I am sure that the corporation will regard that as immensely helpful. However, I do not understand the relationship between ABP and the outer harbour. I understand that the amendment relates to the area that will be used by yachts and small boats but not by ABP or, indeed, any other commercial shipping organisations. Much as I understand my hon. Friend's desire to find a means of adding to the corporation's income, I do not see why the burden should fall there.

Mr. Morgan: I am grateful for my hon. Friend's intervention. The problem is that it is hard to see exactly where the line should be drawn between the outer harbour and the commercial shipping area. Until the recent addition of the little harbour of refuge area, we were dealing with a fixed wall and everything inside the wall that is affected by it. The area outside the wall is a grey area—it is much more difficult to get a clear distinction, although such a distinction is necessary because of the relationship between ABP and the Cardiff Bay development corporation. We on this side have never been happy with that relationship because of the position of Lord Crickhowell in the other place.

Mr. Rod Richards (Clwyd, North-West): When the hon. Gentleman says "We on this side", can we be sure that he is speaking for the Labour party? Is the hon. Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) or the hon. Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth (Mr. Michael) speaking for the Labour party? What precisely is the Labour party's view of the amendment? The hon. Members for Cardiff, West and for Cardiff, South and Penarth seem to be at odds on this point, as well as on the general principle.

Mr. Morgan: I am grateful for the hon. Gentleman's filibuster. He is a member of the party of so-called progress which is trying to get the Bill through rapidly so that the bulldozers can move in. I am not sure what he is saying. Obviously, he is well aware that I am the Opposition spokesman on Welsh affairs with regard to the Bill, and that I must communicate with my hon. Friends, who are naturally sensitive, for the purposes of clarifying the amendment.

Mr. Michael: I ask my hon. Friend not to be drawn to one side by the irrelevant and unhelpful intervention from the hon. Member for Clwyd, North-West (Mr. Richards). As my hon. Friend rightly says, we are dealing with the way in which costs relating to the outer harbour will be dealt with. The outer harbour is important in terms of yachting. I understand that the Lords amendment seeks to resolve any doubt that someone will pay for the whole issue.

What I am concerned about—the hon. Member for Clwyd, North-West was trying to distract us—is the relevance of ABP in that regard, because I understand that the area that will be enclosed with the outer harbour will be used exclusively by yacht and pleasure boat users. That

area does not come into the field of ABP with regard to the property on the Grosvenor water side or the operational use of the docks.

Mr. Morgan: I am seeking to clarify where commercial shipping stops and leisure sailing starts. Clearly, leisure sailing is enjoyed within the bay, the locks and the inland bay which is referred to several hundred times in the Bill. The outer harbour is a relatively late addition and so far has been explored only to a limited degree. There is no natural break between it and commercial shipping lanes. What is a small commercial ship? What is a large yacht? How are they to be distinguished from one another? Do both have the right to use the harbour of refuge during storm conditions when both might wish to get close to harbour?

6.30 pm

Mr. Allan Rogers (Rhondda): My hon. Friend said that he was clarifying these amendments. We in the Rhondda valley are greatly concerned about the millions of pounds from the local government kitty spent on financing this, whatever it is. My constituents are most concerned to know how they will eventually reach the sea in their pleasure craft. If they sail down the Rhondda and into the inland bay, how do they then get direct access? I know that a few of them would like to sail up towards north Wales and get hold of the hon. Gentleman, whose name I am not sure of —I have heard him called many names, but I can never remember his real name.

How do navigators from the Rhondda, from Ferndale and Maerdy, get a pleasure craft out into the channel? I am not sure how that is to be done. All this money is being spent, yet my constituents cannot take their boats out. I know that my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, Central (Mr. Jones) comes from Maerdy. His family have a huge pleasure craft. Years ago, they used to go to Porthcawl in it, but nowadays things have changed completely. I wish that my hon. Friend would clarify how pleasure craft will be able to get out into the channel.

Mr. Morgan: I am sure that I can clarify that. Navigators would sail out into the Bristol channel at high tide. It is certainly not possible at low tide, which is why we have an outer harbour supposedly to act as a harbour of refuge. That is our main concern in the amendment to the Lords amendment.

Mr. Jonathan Evans (Brecon and Radnor) *rose*——

Mr. Morgan: I will give way for another filibuster.

Mr. Evans: The amendment to the Lords amendment provides that costs may be recovered from ABP. No doubt the hon. Gentleman will in due course explain why that will be necessary. Can he tell the House whether he has canvassed this proposition with ABP and what its reaction was?

Mr. Morgan: I am not sure why Government Back Benchers, having been anxious to pass the guillotine, are spinning out proceedings on this amendment by asking idle questions. Are they perhaps extremely worried about the vote on the next business? [HON. MEMBERS: "Answer the question."] Yes, I will answer the question. It would have been extremely inappropriate for me to discuss or canvass, as the hon. Gentleman puts it in his lawyer's language, the matter with ABP because of the dangerously incestuous relationship between ABP and the Cardiff Bay development corporation. After all, the corporation was set up by Lord Crickhowell who, after he left this place, became a member of the board of ABP. The corporation gave £2·5 million to ABP only a few months ago as a straight grant under its urban investment powers. So, no, I will certainly not canvass ABP about who should pay for what.

I am extremely concerned about Lord Crickhowell's position as the director of a company that is a direct beneficiary to the tune of £2·5 million of the development corporation. I am anxious to establish who should be charged for what and to ensure that ABP, having got £2·5 million from the corporation, should not be able to get any more by not paying its fair share of costs in respect of boats taking advantage of the harbour of refuge on their way to Cardiff bay. Although the harbour of refuge is designed for pleasure sailors, it is difficult to restrict its use.

Mr. Roger Evans (Monmouth) *rose*——

Mr. Morgan: The next one is lining up. I am pleased to see further evidence of a Government filibuster. Three is definitely a filibuster.

Mr. Evans: If the hon. Gentleman is seeking to charge on to ABP the charge for commercial shipping usages, which at least is a consistent line of argument, can he explain why he has tacked this particular phrase on to the end of a Lords amendment, which talks both about

"pleasure craft and other vessels"

and apparently does not make the distinction that he makes? Or is he simply trying to make a distinction for vessels using the harbour as a place of refuge? It is not clear what his wording accomplishes.

Mr. Morgan: As always, the hon. Gentleman raises the legal niceties of any issue. He has drawn our attention to an extremely important pointer in the Lords amendment. The use of the harbour of refuge is not restricted to pleasure craft. The Lords amendment refers to "other vessels". That is an open category and could cover small commercial craft. Those small commercial craft will pay harbour dues when they eventually reach Cardiff or Barry—it is more likely to be Cardiff than Barry—but they will have had the advantage of what might be called a free gift from the taxpayer, primarily intended for pleasure craft, but difficult to restrict in storm conditions at low tide when it is difficult to make ground.

Low tide has always caused a problem for sailing in the upper Bristol channel and for the docking of commercial vessels in the commercial ports of Cardiff and the now closed port of Penarth. That windfall should be reflected in some way in their harbour dues. The hon. Gentleman makes an extremely good point. He is making my point for me. We need a re-partition of costs that reflects the intent of the Lords amendment which, clearly, is not confined to pleasure craft. It also covers other vessels which could include small commercial vessels.

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): Does the hon. Gentleman agree that tacking on the words

"and may recover reasonable costs so incurred from Associated British Ports"

to clause 13 would be an attack on pleasure craft users in Wales who want to be able to use this harbour area free of costs? How can he possibly justify that? Is it not an attack on the rights of people in Wales who want to use their pleasure craft in the traditional way?

Mr. Morgan: That is absolutely the reverse of the case. A pleasure craft has every right to use a harbour of refuge. The harbour exists for such craft. Commercial craft should not be able to make free use, although they should be able to make use, of a harbour of refuge as they ply their trade towards Cardiff docks, Newport docks or Bristol. Surely, Tory Members would agree with the philosophy that a commercial trader should pay for additional benefits that come as a windfall from endeavours to provide safer conditions for sailing in the stormy, choppy waters and highly tidal waters—that is the added problem—of the upper Bristol channel.

What to do at low water in a storm has always been the problem in the Bristol channel. It is impossible to get back into port because of the low tide, yet it is necessary to find shelter in the lee of Penarth Head. The hon. Member for Hertfordshire, North (Mr. Heald) being as interested in Welsh affairs as he is, will be aware that Penarth Head is almost a natural harbour, breaking up the waves from about 25 ft to 5 ft inside Penarth Head. That is of enormous advantage for the safety of sailors. I do not object to commercial craft having use of the harbour, but they should pay their share. Obviously, it should be done by a roundabout route as they will pay dues to the commercial port where they dock. It is likely to be ABP.

Associated British Ports should therefore have to chip in for the benefit so that it does not get the same type of windfall gains as it received in the case of the £2·5 million that it was gifted by Cardiff Bay development corporation a couple of months ago, to which I strongly object.

Mr. Rogers: My hon. Friend still has not addressed the central problem of clause 13, which is how the people of the Rhondda, in their pleasure craft—and some of them in their coracles—come down into the harbour of refuge. If one cannot get from outside in, how can they get from inside out? It is all right in north Wales. For instance, the hon. Member for Clwyd, North-West (Mr. Richards) is an expert on marinas and I cannot think of anyone who could be more expert. In south Wales, however, we have special problems, and so many people in the valleys are bursting to get out into that harbour of refuge.

My hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth (Mr. Michael), who is not in the Chamber at the moment, said that there is special provision for the valleys in the Bill, and he hopes that there will be a spin-off for them. Will my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) spell out what will be the spin-off for the valleys from the clause?

Mr. Morgan: The spin-off for the valleys may be by way of the salmon getting up to the valleys through the fish pass, but I am not sure whether yachts can make it up to the valleys as easily as the salmon. Obviously, I want to make various arguments of that kind about nature conservation, but I do not think that tonight is the place to make them.

We have given a clear exposition of why the House should properly consider the amendment, and I draw my remarks to a close.

Mr. Roger Evans: I can understand the force of the argument that commercial usage should lead to some form of recovery of costs by the development corporation from Associated British Ports. Whether that is right or wrong as a matter of policy, at least it is a consistent and rational idea. I am worried that the amendment to the Lords amendment proposed does not achieve the result that the hon. Member seeks.

Mr. Morgan: The hon. Gentleman says that.

Mr. Evans: It matters, because when Parliament produces wording in such a fashion that someone else subsequently has to interpret it, hon. Members cannot complain, as they should, when the law is not as they wished it to be. We have to get it right.

Mr. Rogers: The hon. Gentleman, who is a barrister, makes his living by trawling over the mistakes of Parliament. If the laws came out perfectly from the House perhaps all he would need to do would be to retire, which may not be a bad thing.

Mr. Evans: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his observations about my retirement.

There is a serious point which cannot be written off as simply a matter of lawyers and legalese. It is the question of whether Parliament knows what it wants to achieve, and achieves it in legislation. If the hon. Gentleman wants to achieve the policy that he set out to achieve, I can understand it. Whether it is right is an entirely different matter. The issue is that the amendment to the Lords amendment which he has drafted and is supporting does not distinguish between commercial craft and pleasure craft. What he has done is to tack amendment (a) on the end of the existing Lords amendment to clause 13.

Mr. Morgan: The hon. Gentleman forgets that, if a pleasure craft does not enter the lock gates at Cardiff docks, Newport docks or Barry docks, it will not have any transactions with Associated British Ports. Only the non-pleasure craft that are referred to in the amendment could possibly be eligible to pay dues to Associated British Ports, of which it in turn would have to contribute part to the Cardiff Bay development corporation to recompense the taxpayer for the facility that would have been provided by the Bill.

Mr. Evans: I hear what the hon. Gentleman says, but I regret to say that the wording does not accomplish that. If he wishes it to accomplish what he seeks to accomplish, he should say so in specific and direct terms. On that basis, I oppose his amendment.

Mr. Paul Flynn (Newport, West): My objection to the Lords amendment is the wording "at all times available", which will cause practical problems and serious environmental consequences. During the summer months, my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) and I, in our researches for the debate tonight, went to Iceland to visit the Myvatn lakes. Myvatn means midge lakes. We inspected the lake there, which is a similar size to the lake that will be created at Cardiff bay. The birds that nest there during the summer months move to Cardiff to winter. Our trip was thorough and educational.

If the scheme goes ahead, a harbour of refuge will be created that may be available at all times. My hon. Friend referred to it as in the lee of Penarth. That celebrated hill of Penarth is the hill that hon. Members will remember from the celebrated poem by Tennyson:

"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter"

and so forth. That well known poem refers to the stately ships going by to the harbour under the hill—the refuge harbour under the hill, as Tennyson would write if he were writing today.

6.45 pm

If that harbour of refuge is to be created, and if it is to be available at all times, the supporters of the amendment seem to have ignored the rise and fall of tide in the Bristol channel, which is the second highest rise and fall of tide anywhere in the world. If the harbour is open and available and if water is coming in any time during the 24-hour cycle, the effects will be serious.

Many people have mentioned the birds that come from Myvatn. That is a very different stretch of water, because Myvatn is filled with meltwater from the Yokull, as they call it—a similar word to Welsh—the glaciers around the lake. The harbour would be fed by a different source of water, but there would be a transformation, in that, at the moment, Cardiff bay supports many forms of wildlife, which depend on the nature of the water, the solidity of the water and the fresh water, and that would change fundamentally.

One of the great puzzles at the moment is the success of the cormorants in Cardiff bay. They can only survive in clear water, and the water in Cardiff bay is very turbulent —as it is throughout the Bristol channel—with mud usually held in suspension. It is one of the great puzzles of the whole of the Bristol channel that in my constituency, and all along the coast at certain times, clean rock is exposed and at other times the rock is covered with a foot of mud. It depends on the amount of mud that is held in suspension. That is a crucial point. Those cormorants are surviving against all the information that ornithologists give us, because they should not be able to see the fish that they catch in the water, but they manage, against all odds in the turbulence of the water, to survive and multiply well.

When the barrage is constructed, there will be a great increase in the number of cormorants, but I believe that the growth and habitat of those cormorants will be vitally affected if the harbour of refuge is available at any time of day.

Mr. Michael: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for giving way. I am trying to follow what he is saying. He says that the improved quality of the water in the bay will lead to increased activity by cormorants. Do I have him correct?

Mr. Flynn: Yes. I reject the argument that the barrage will destroy the habitat, because I believe that in many ways it will change it for the better. The occasional summer visitors that come down might find other habitats for their refuge, in the same way as my constituents.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. It is difficult to relate these cormorants to Associated British Ports. Is the hon. Gentleman going to find a linkage?

Mr. Flynn: I think I am making the point in the original amendment, which says:

"In managing the outer harbour the Development Corporation shall secure that it is at all times available".

We cannot ignore the effect that that will have on wildlife. One form of wildlife has been totally neglected in all the passionate pleas that have been made in this debate. I found it difficult to oppose the guillotine motion with my normal passion and conviction and to say that we must not stop debate on an issue that has taken only 68 days of parliamentary time—more than any business in the House since the Corn Laws.

However, I wish to discuss a neglected form of wildlife that has hardly been mentioned. We have already heard all about the redshanks and we have now heard a bit about the cormorants, but a precious form of wildlife exists in Grangetown and the docks will be desperately affected if the harbour is open for 24 hours a day—the Grangetown rat, which lives in abundance there.

The rats' habitat is normally undisturbed because they live at the higher reaches of the mud. However, about six times a year the tide reaches a level that interferes with the rats' habitat and they then come over the wall at Windsor esplanade and other areas. You may be surprised to know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that local people's enthusiasm for the rat is not as great as it might be. That form of nature may be under direct threat as the barrage would affect and possibly destroy its habitat. That problem must be dealt with tonight.

The harbour of refuge affects a relatively small area of the Bristol channel, but serious problems may arise if we accept, as scientists do, that global warming will alter tidal levels.

Mr. Morgan: Although we are interested in my hon. Friend's observations about rats as a form of wildlife, and are aware of the small section of his constituency between the Old Glamorgan canal and the River Taff referred to as "rat island", will my hon. Friend confirm whether he is discussing brown rats, which are a form of wildlife, or black rats, which are a parasite on man and not native to this country?

Mr. Flynn: I am discussing brown rats. I am well aware of the black rat's effect when it decimated life in Wales and elsewhere. Perhaps we should form an organisation in defence of the rat because it is seriously underloved by nature lovers. It is difficult to understand the idiotic bias towards cuddly, attractive animals rather than celebrating nature in all its glorious variety.

If the harbour of refuge is built, a great difficulty will arise as a result of global warming. Large areas in south Wales will be exposed to flooding if the already high tide rises even higher and is combined with a tidal surge. Will the Minister assure us that, if the harbour of refuge is available at all times, it will not destroy the beautiful new habitat of a range of wildlife or threaten the survival of the Grangetown rat?

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. Gwilym Jones): I have tried carefully to follow the words of the hon. Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) and Opposition Members who have spoken in support of the amendment.

The outer harbour will be managed by the development corporation. As the hon. Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth (Mr. Michael) implied, Associated British Ports will neither benefit not suffer as a result of the outer harbour's management. There is no reason, therefore, why it should be expected to meet the development corporation's costs in doing so.

A development agreement exists between ABP and the development corporation. It provides that both bodies will share in the profits arising from the developments that will occur around the inland bay. However, that has nothing to do with the management of the outer harbour.

[Mr. Gwilym Jones]

This amendment, made in another place, typifies the process through which the Bill has gone. There have been extensive negotiations with all the relevant local interests and the development corporation has sought to accommodate all legitimate concerns.

The Royal Yachting Association and the local sailing clubs rightly waited to ensure that the outer harbour would be available for use at all times by vessels that are about to enter the inland bay, ones that have just left or ones which need to use it as a harbour of refuge.

Our acceptance of this and other amendments during the Bill's passage shows that we have kept a balance between the wider benefits of the barrage to the development of Cardiff on the one hand, and the need, on the other hand, to give proper weight to the protection of legitimate local interests.

Mr. Rogers: We still regard the Minister as a Rhondda boy, although he has since lost his way. Will he deal with the serious problem of the Rhondda yachtsmen? He says that he is looking after local interests but how are we to benefit from the outer harbour in the Rhondda? He mentioned the Royal Yachting Association, but has never heard of the Penpisgah yacht club, which is a substantial organisation.

Mr. Jones: Perhaps I should not have given way.

The Royal Yachting Association has sought to represent all yachting associations and our acceptance of the amendment has been to accommodate yachtsmen from the Rhondda and everywhere else.

The barrage will transform an area twice the size of the city centre, much of which has been unknown territory to many who live in the city for far too many years. Environmentally, it will benefit the whole city; economically, its benefit will be felt throughout south Wales.

As one of the few originals involved with this exciting proposal from the outset, I am delighted that the final stage of parliamentary approval has arrived.

Mr. Ron Davies (Caerphilly): The Minister seems to have mixed up his speeches, because that is clearly not the speech that he should be giving in respect of Lords amendment No. 1. It seems to resemble the speech that he gave on Third Reading. Would it be appropriate for him to check whether he has the right speech?

Mr. Jones: No, because it gives me an opportunity to acknowledge the hon. Member for Caerphilly (Mr. Davies), who is the only other hon. Member who has been involved in this debate from the beginning. Members representing Cardiff, and even Secretaries of State, have changed, but he and I have been here from the beginning. I could have wished that he shared my pleasure that we are reaching the conclusion tonight.

Mr. Davies: The Minister and I started on this process in 1986. I was opposed to the Cardiff barrage then and have been consistently opposed to it. My hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan) asked the Minister earlier to explain why he opposed the measure in 1986 and has subsequently decided to support it.

Mr. Jones: The best answer that I can give is that Cardiff is a fine capital city, with one of the best civic centres in Europe. What we shall approve today represents not only a major advance of the economy of Cardiff and south Wales but a mighty inheritance which we can proudly pass on to future generations. Nevertheless, it is important that the barrage itself should be designed with the utmost regard to safety. That is why this amendment places a clear duty on the corporation to operate the outer harbour to secure the safety of pleasure craft. In bad weather, not all boats seeking shelter could use the locks at the same time. This amendment ensures that the outer harbour is managed so that it is available for them to shelter safely.

Question put and negatived.

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Question agreed to.

Clause 18

APPLICATION OF HARBOURS CLAUSES

Lords amendment: No. 2, in page 10, line 47, leave out ("24") and insert ("23")

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

This is purely a drafting amendment to clause 18, which incorporates in the Bill certain provisions of the Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act 1847. Subsection (2) lists the provisions that are not to be incorporated, including section 24 of the 1847 Act. However, section 24 will be repealed by the Statute Law (Repeals) Bill. The amendment simply ensures that clause 18(2) of the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill is consistent with the changes that will be affected by the repealing legislation.

Mr. Morgan: May I ask the Minister a question about the return to the legislation of section 24 of the Harbours, Docks, and Piers Clauses Act 1847? What exactly will be the impact of omitting it from the omission, as it were?

My question relates very closely to the substance of our last debate. I understand that, as a result of the change, Customs and Excise would be empowered to examine even pleasure vessels moving in and out of Cardiff bay. As has been pointed out, the distinction that existed back in 1847 —the date of the Act that is being incorporated in part, although not as a whole, in the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill —no longer exists. I refer to the distinction between yachts and pleasure craft, and other ships.

Is it being suggested that drug-running yuppies are using yachts to get in and out, and that Customs and Excise want to reserve the power to board those yachts to find out whether they are carrying illicit cargoes? If the Bill had not been amended, that would be covered, and Customs and Excise would not have lost the power conferred by the 1847 Act. Has this concern arisen suddenly, or is there some other explanation for the late change in the Bill?

7 pm

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It may be convenient if I tell the House—indeed, I mentioned it last week in the business statement, referring to the possibility that messages from the House of Lords would need to be

considered—that it is proposed that Lords messages relating to the British Railways Bill be considered after the conclusion of this business.

Mr. Ron Davies: Further to that point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Has the Leader of the House had an opportunity to convey that information to the shadow Leader of the House? Obviously, it was important for the Opposition to be informed of this development.

We are very disappointed that important proceedings on the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill have been interrupted by this move, which clearly derives from the Government's inability to deliver their majority in either House. Will time be available at the conclusion of our proceedings on the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill for a debate—albeit brief—on the message from the House of Lords?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I should point out that the time is coming out of that allocated by the guillotine motion to the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill debate.

Mr. Newton: Further to those points of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It will, I think, be visible that I had asked for the shadow Leader of the House to be informed of our intention to take this business; but I wanted to let the House know as soon as possible.

There is no question of interrupting proceedings on the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill. It is proposed that the Lords messages be taken at the conclusion of those proceedings. The guillotine motion that the House passed yesterday provides time for the consideration of Lords messages.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): Further to the points of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is important. The Leader of the House has, in effect, used a point of order to make a business statement. There was no indication on the screens that such a statement was to be made. Hon. Members who would have wanted to be present have therefore been denied the opportunity. The change in tonight's business should have been shown on every screen in the House, in the ordinary way. The failure to announce it is utterly disgraceful.

Mrs. Margaret Beckett (Derby, South): Further to that point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As the Lord President said, his office attempted to notify us; unfortunately, that happened only about 30 seconds ago. I did not realise that the right hon. Gentleman would be on his feet almost as soon as I had put the phone down.

My hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer) has made an important point. I do not wish to take up the House's time in a guillotined debate, but it is extremely important for all hon. Members to have every opportunity to learn what is likely to happen. I hope that every attempt will be made to communicate that to them.

Mr. Newton: I assure the right hon. Lady that every attempt will be made to act along the lines that have been suggested.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Let me reply to the hon. Member for Cardiff, West (Mr. Morgan). This is purely a drafting amendment to ensure that the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill is consistent with the repealing legislation.

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment:-

The House divided: Ayes 291, Noes 133.

Division No. 391] **[7.04 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Alton, David
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcl)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Harvey, Nick
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*

Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
Lynne, Ms Liz
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
Maclennan, Robert
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Merchant, Piers
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Needham, Richard
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Rendel, David
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Riffkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thumham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Tyler, Paul
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Wallace, James
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Ashton, Joe
Barnes, Harry
Bayley, Hugh
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Bradley, Keith
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Cann, Jamie
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Eagle, Ms Angela
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Fraser, John
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Hanson, David
Hinchliffe, David
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Janner, Greville
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Loyden, Eddie
McAvoy, Thomas
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
Madden, Max
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Murphy, Paul
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Radice, Giles
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Rowlands, Ted
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Turner, Dennis
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Jon Owen Jones and Mr. Peter Hain.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Mr. Ron Davies: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The House faces an appalling situation tonight. The Government are in a shambles. They have been defeated for the third time in the House of Lords. Now they have had to come here and disrupt a debate on the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, which is of immense importance to the people of Cardiff——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I must put the question on Lords amendment No. 3, and inform the House that it involves privilege.

Lords amendment: No. 3, after clause 21, to insert the following new clause—

Powers to deal with consequences of altered groundwater levels—

(". The Land Drainage Act 1991 shall have effect as if each of the references to flooding in sections 14, 15 and 66 of the Act included a reference to any other adverse consequence of an alteration of groundwater levels occurring as a result of the construction of the barrage.")

It being two hours after the commencement of proceedings on the motion, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to Order this day, designated Lords amendment No. 3 as appearing to Madam Speaker to involve questions of privilege.*

Mr. Deputy Speaker *then put forthwith the Question,* That this House doth agree with the Lords in the designated amendment:—

The House proceeded to a Division—

Mr. Andrew F. Bennett (Denton and Reddish) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Would you please tell us what exactly we are voting on?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We are voting on Lords amendment No. 3 to the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill. I thought that I had made that adequately clear. Hon. Members should pay attention.

The House having divided: Ayes 294, Noes 140.

Division No. 392] **[7.19 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Alton, David
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
Lynne, Ms Liz
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Merchant, Piers
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Needham, Richard
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Rendel, David
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain

Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Tyler, Paul
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Wallace, James
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Timothy Kirkhope.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Ashton, Joe
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Denham, John
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Etherington, Bill
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Fraser, John
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harman, Ms Harriet
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Janner, Greville
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Loyden, Eddie
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McNamara, Kevin
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Oiner, William
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Radice, Giles
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rowlands, Ted
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Stevenson, George
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Turner, Dennis
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wise, Audrey
Wray, Jimmy
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Jon Owen Jones and
Mr. Gordon McMaster.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Question accordingly agreed to, the Commons being willing to waive their privilege.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *then put forthwith the Question,* That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords amendments:

The House proceeded to a Division——

Mr. Piers Merchant (Beckenham) *(seated and covered)*: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There appears to be some delay in the No Lobby. I should be grateful if that could be investigated.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will ask the Serjeant at Arms to investigate any further delay.

The House having divided: Ayes 301, Noes 144.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Division No. 393] **[7.36 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Alton, David
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcl)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shr)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph

Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Harvey, Nick
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
Lynne, Ms Liz
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
Maclennan, Robert
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Merchant, Piers
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Needham, Richard
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Rendel, David
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Tyler, Paul
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Wallace, James
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Robert G. Hughes and Mr. Andrew Mitchell.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Ashton, Joe
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Fraser, John
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.

Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McNamara, Kevin
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Radice, Giles
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rowlands, Ted
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Stevenson, George
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Turner, Dennis
Walley, Joan
Wareing, Robert N
Welsh, Andrew
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Jon Owen Jones and
Mr. Gordon McMaster.

Lords amendments Nos. 4 to 12 accordingly agreed to.

Mrs. Beckett: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know how conscious you are, as are all the occupants of the Chair, of your duty to, in particular, Back-Bench Members—a duty which I previously thought was of considerable importance to the Leader of the House. Do you feel that it is in order for the business to be changed in this grossly discourteous way without any proper business statement, without any notice appearing on the Annunciator that anything was being raised in the Chamber and with only a cursory phone call, barely terminated before the Leader of the House rose to his feet, from his office to mine? All that is in order to interrupt guillotined business to tell the House that the Government propose to change the order of business within a few minutes. There can hardly be an hon. Member who can say that they have had adequate notice of what was taking place or adequate time to respond properly. Is that respectful treatment of Back Benchers?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The House will have an opportunity to vote on whether the Lords amendment is taken forthwith.

Mr. Michael: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am sure that you will understand the anger with which I raise this point of order when you consider that the measure that has been interrupted was the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill and that the Cardiff Bay development corporation area is entirely within my constituency. Is it in order for business to be totally disrupted in this way by the Leader of the House wandering in here without notice and taking up time on guillotined business? The Bill is of enormous importance to my constituents, to Cardiff and to the whole of south Wales. The Leader of the House showed no courtesy to my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) or to other hon. Friends on the Front and Back Benches. Is that in order?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Yes, it was in order or it would have been ruled out of order by the Chair at the time.

Mr. Cryer: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As you will appreciate, there were many angry people in the House when the Leader of the House used a point of order to, in effect, make a business statement. My understanding is that notice of a business statement is not required by Standing Order, but it is a convention—an important convention—of the House. In addition, enumerators have been provided throughout the length and breadth of the House of Commons to provide hon. Members with information. There was no information on the enumerators—

HON. MEMBERS: 'Annunciators'.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It is difficult for me to rule on a point of order if I cannot hear the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Cryer: There was no information on the annunciators to tell hon. Members that a business statement disguised as a point of order was being made.

In addition, I raised a further point of order at that time —only a relatively short time ago. I said that the further information about the way that the House was going to deal with Lords messages on the Bill should be on the enumerator—*[Interruption.]* I mean the annunciator. This vital issue is being trivialised by the pin-striped hooligans on the Government Benches. *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The House must now settle down. I cannot hear what the hon. Gentleman expects me to rule on.

8 pm

Mr. Cryer: I do not propose to start again, except to say that there have been difficulties with the various television sets which announce the business of the House across the length and breadth of the Palace. I understand that the information has been changing rapidly and that it did not get the usual amount of time that is allocated to a change of this nature.

The unusual and exceptional circumstances have been brought about by the Government's incompetence. They are organising the prorogation of the House on Friday, not the Opposition. We are prepared to come back and work. *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I think I have now taken the hon. Gentleman's message, and I fully understand the point that he is making. He made a similar point earlier. Will he conclude his point of order, and may we have quiet to allow the Chair to hear?

Mr. Cryer: May I ask, in view of the serious confusion which is prevailing tonight, that the House adjourns for 15 minutes? That would allow the usual channels to arrange for the proper conduct of business. It would also allow hon. Members who are not here to receive a clear message on the television sets which announce the business that there will be a debate on the messages from the Lords, according to the decision which was made yesterday, for one hour once that debate has started. That is a reasonable request, and I put it to you that it should be accepted.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I will deal with points of order one at a time. Before I deal with the point of order

that has just been made, I hope that all points of order are genuine and are not delaying tactics. I have noted the hon. Gentleman's point, and I am sure that the Government have also noted it. I have nothing further to add.

Mr. Bennett: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You will recall that, at the end of the proceedings last night, we appointed a Committee to draw up reasons to persuade the House of Lords that they should agree with this House.

Can you explain how I can see a copy of the reasons that were drawn up? What process is there for the Lords to communicate to this House the reasons why they turned down our request? I hope that you will accept that it is unsatisfactory for the Government to rush through a measure such as this. I have a large number of British Rail pensioners in my constituency, and a large number of constituents who use British Rail. They have every right to know the reasons why the Government are pushing the measure through the House with such disgusting and indecent haste.

I hope that you can explain what was said in the Committee that drew up the message to the Lords, why the Lords did not accept the message and what further action hon. Members can take to make sure that we are properly informed before we are rushed into a further debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. They have been included in today's Votes and Proceedings. The Lords have not disagreed.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do not know whether you are aware of it, but it was announced on the House of Lords annunciators that the Lords would have to hang around for a while. It seems rather strange to me that the Government, who do not have the guts to tell the House of Commons, informed Members of the House of Lords to hang about late tonight before they made the announcement in this House.

We have come to a tidy pass when the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons are bypassed to tell their people in the Lords to stay on. Some of those people were not ready to stay on in the House of Lords. The net result is that doctors and nurses will be needed over there. The matter needs investigating.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Gentleman's point of order has nothing to do with this House.

Mr. Joseph Ashton (Bassetlaw): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I put it to you that the last vote should be taken again. There is no doubt that the Division Bells did not ring on the ground floor of the House. A few hon. Members who were down there were not aware that a Division was taking place.

I understand, and I have seen it happen on previous occasions, that, according to the rules of the House, if Members say that they were misled by the annunciators and by the Division bells, they have the right to demand that the Division be taken again. I put it to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it was not a fair Division.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is too late now. No complaint was made at the time.

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): Further to the earlier points of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would ask you to rule on whether the Government are playing games with democracy in this place. They could have made a business announcement days ago about what would happen if the Lords disagreed with us. However, they chose not to. The Leader of the House should have made a business statement, and there was no excuse for his not making one, once the Lords disagreed with the Commons earlier this evening.

There is an issue more important than either of those examples, and it follows the point of order made by the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner). It was announced that the House of Lords had been "suspended during pleasure"—that slightly odd phrase—*[Interruption.]* I am told that the mind boggles, but it is not for us to comment on that. The important point is that hon. Members have no opportunity of knowing what was debated in the Lords. We have not had a chance to read *Hansard*, and have not had an opportunity to hear the Lords' reasons. They were asked to reconsider, and they refused that request, presumably for good reason. The Lords are not so accountable to the Whips as we are.

I would ask you to rule, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we do not proceed until we get a proper business statement and until we see the *Hansard* report of the Lords debate. I would further ask that we do not proceed until consultation takes place, not only with the Labour party's appropriate channels, but certainly with those of my party and—I hazard a guess—those of the other parties, none of whom was consulted at any stage during the day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have already ruled that the House will have the opportunity to decide whether or not it accepts the decision of the Lords. I have already ruled on the point of order made by the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner).

I believe that we have now had sufficient points of order.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I will take a final point of order from the hon. Member for Workington (Mr. Campbell-Savours).

Mr. D. N. Campbell-Savours (Workington): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You will have heard the intervention of my hon. Friend the Member for Bassetlaw (Mr. Ashton), who raised what you must recognise was a very serious matter. He was in a room in the House of Commons and the Division bell did not ring. He was relying on that Bell to tell him that a Division was taking place. My hon. Friend tells me that he missed the vote. If he did miss the vote, surely it is legitimate to request that the Division be repeated.

In the circumstances, surely a check should be made to establish whether the bell was working. If it was not working, one would have thought that the House would want to divide. Surely these are principles that we have established on many occasions before.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I want an opportunity to rule on the point of order raised by the hon. Member for Workington (Mr. Campbell-Savours). There was no report that there was a problem with the Division bell. It is now too late to go back on the proceedings. That is my ruling.

Mr. Bennett: I beg to move, That strangers do withdraw.

[Mr. Bennett]

Notice being taken that strangers were present, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to Standing Order No. 143 (Withdrawal of Strangers from the House), put forthwith the Question,* That strangers do withdraw:—

The House proceeded to a Division—

Mr. Peter L. Pike (Burnley) *(seated and covered)*: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is an important constitutional issue where there is a difference between the two Houses and we are waiting to receive a message from the other place. I understand that, when we receive it, the Government will move a manuscript amendment to that message from the Lords. I do not know whether you are even aware of the terms of that manuscript amendment, but it is clear that Members of both Houses are not aware and I therefore seek your guidance. Would it be appropriate to adjourn for 15 minutes to consider exactly what the Government propose to do before they try to do it?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Gentleman may not be aware that the amendments have been in the Vote Office for some hours. I understand that hon. Members from all parties have copies of the amendments.

Mr. Pike *(seated and covered)*: Further to that point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I accept that the three amendments from the other House are in the Vote Office, but we are told that Government are to move a manuscript amendment, which is not available in the Vote Office.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that we shall be discussing only the three amendments.

Mr. Bennett *(seated and covered)*: Further to that point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If I understand it correctly, you have just ruled that we shall not be able to debate the manuscript amendment. I find that a little puzzling because I thought that normally the Chair would have to look at the amendments before ruling that we should not debate them. If you have seen them, surely the House should be able to see them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No amendments have been submitted to the Lords amendments. *[Interruption.]* Order. I understand that there are hon. Members still in both Lobbies, so will the Serjeant at Arms investigate both Lobbies?

The House having divided: Ayes 29, Noes 389.

Division No. 394] **[8.10 pm**

AYES

Ashton, Joe
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Bennett, Andrew F.
Cann, Jamie
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Dafis, Cynog
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Janner, Greville
Kilfoyle, Peter
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
McAllion, John
Martlew, Eric
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
Otner, William
Parry, Robert
Pickthall, Colin
Purchase, Ken
Salmond, Alex
Simpson, Alan
Stevenson, George
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Welsh, Andrew

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. John Spellar and
Mr. Alan Meale.

NOES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Alton, David
Amess, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Barnes, Harry
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Bermingham, Gerald
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Byers, Stephen
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clappison, James
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Ruclif)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Coffey, Ann
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Connarty, Michael
Conway, Derek
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Corston, Ms Jean
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Denham, John
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eagle, Ms Angela
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Flynn, Paul
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gallie, Phil
Gapes, Mike
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gordon, Mildred
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Gould, Bryan
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hall, Mike
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hanson, David
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Harvey, Nick
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick

Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Home Robertson, John
Horam, John
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jamieson, David
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Key, Robert
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kirkwood, Archy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lewis, Terry
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Mackinlay, Andrew
Maclean, David
Maclennan, Robert
McLoughlin, Patrick
McMaster, Gordon
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marek, Dr John
Marland, Paul
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Needham, Richard
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
O'Hara, Edward
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pendry, Tom
Pickles, Eric
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Randall, Stuart
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Rendel, David
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rooney, Terry
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rowlands, Ted
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spearing, Nigel
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Tyler, Paul
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Wallace, James
Waller, Gary
Walley, Joan
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Worthington, Tony
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Timothy Kirkhope and
Mr. Michael Brown

Question accordingly negatived.

Railways Bill

8.33 pm

Several hon. Members *rose——*

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): Order. I have to acquaint the House that the message has been brought from the Lords by—*[Interruption.]* Order. [HON. MEMBERS: "On a point of order."] Order. I will take one point of order, of which I have already been given notice, from Dr. John Marek.

Dr. John Marek (Wrexham): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I raise my point of order with you particularly in view of your statement that the only amendments that will be before us are the amendments brought from the House of Lords, labelled 1A, 1B and 1C in the Vote Office. I looked at amendment 1B in the Vote Office, and it says:

"Subsection (4), line 6, leave out from ('for') to ('in') and insert ('selection as the franchisee.')."

If you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, look at line 6 of subsection (4) of amendment (a) from last night, you will not see the word "for". That means that you either have a different amendment from the ones that we have in the Vote Office or the amendment patently is nonsense. May I suggest to you that the only way out of this impasse is for us to have a period of consideration and for you to suspend the sitting of the House for 15 minutes?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In answer to the hon. Gentleman, the line number is correct, but it refers to the italics on the bottom of the sheet.

Several hon. Members *rose——*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I have to acquaint the House—[HON. MEMBERS: "On a point of order."] Order. I have to acquaint the House that

"The Lords do not insist on their Amendment to the Railways Bill to which the Commons have disagreed; they agree to an Amendment proposed by the Commons in lieu of a Lords Amendment with Amendments to which they desire the agreement of the Commons; they agree, without Amendment, to certain other Amendments proposed by the Commons in lieu of that Lords Amendment; and they agree without Amendment to Amendments made by the Commons to certain other Lords Amendments."

Motion made and Question proposed, That the Lords amendments be considered forthwith.—*[Mr. MacGregor.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Question is that——

Mr. Nigel Spearing (Newham, South): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. May I now speak to the Question that you are about to put?

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. John MacGregor): I beg to move, That this House doth disagree—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Settle down. I shall hear the hon. Member for Newham, South (Mr. Spearing). The Secretary of State was not here.

Mr. Spearing: I am much obliged.

I seek to illustrate why these messages should not be received or agreed. The Government's technical incompetence on pensions, transport, procedure and prorogation shows that the Government have got themselves into a tangle that is unprecedented and unfair on British Rail pensioners and, moreover, on Members of the House.

Last night, the House agreed to a Committee withdrawing to a special room behind the Chamber to draw up reasons for the——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. Gentleman will be aware that the House has agreed to take the Question forthwith. The clock is running, so I hope that the hon. Gentleman will bear that in mind and bring his point of order to a rapid conclusion. *[Interruption.]* Order. I am listening to a point of order. Mr. Nigel Spearing. If there is no point of order, I shall call the Secretary of State.

Question put and agreed to.

Lords amendments accordingly considered.

Clause 22

PUBLIC SECTOR OPERATORS NOT TO BE FRANCHISEES

Lords amendment to a Commons amendment in lieu of a Lords amendment: 1A, in Subsection (4), line 2, leave out from first ("to") to ("in") and insert ("award a franchise under this Part").

Mr. MacGregor: I beg to move, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.

I shall also be asking the House to disagree with the other two. *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The House must settle down. I gave the hon. Member for Newham, South the opportunity to put his point of order. *[Interruption.]* Let me have an opportunity to hear the hon. Gentleman's point of order. Mr. Spearing.

Mr. Spearing: I am obliged to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for making the matter clear. I was under the impression that I was speaking to the debate, not to a point of order. But you have ruled that I am on a point of order, so I shall now put it to you.

Will you please confirm, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, in the normal circumstances of the House, business that is brought to the House at short notice which, by its nature, cannot be transferred to those who wish to debate here, can be stopped by the House accepting a motion that the House do now adjourn. Will you please confirm that the timetable motion, which was moved by Her Majesty's Government a couple of days ago and accepted by the House, precludes that safeguard for keeping the minorities' rights alive? Therefore, the fact that the Question that has just been put, which was taken forthwith without opposition, means that we will not have the opportunity to move the Adjournment of the House?

Secondly—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. In an attempt to cool down the excitement, I inform the House that the hon. Member approached the Chair and asked to put that point of order. I took it to be a point of order and that is why I allowed it. I have now got the hon. Member's message, so I call the Secretary of State. *[Interruption.]*

8.45 pm

Mr. MacGregor: I have already begged to move that the House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment, and I shall be asking the House to disagree with the other two as well. *[Interruption.]* The three

amendments from the other place that we are being asked to debate are basically about one point, the bidding system for franchises. I remind the House of the objectives of the franchising system——

Mr. Ken Livingstone (Brent, East): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Will you assure the House that, unlike other Ministers proposing privatisation legislation, the Secretary of State for Transport will not be rewarded by a well-remunerated position on the privatised railways once this legislation has been pushed through—a big fat backhander, like all the rest of them had?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: That is not a point of order for me, and it has taken up precious time.

Mr. MacGregor: —and they are all to improve the services for passengers. They will do so by promoting the competition for franchises, by encouraging management buy-outs to provide the franchises, by encouraging new entries into the passenger railway industry to provide more competition for franchises and by preventing the dominance of any one person or persons in the market. Those are the key objectives of the bidding system that we have for franchises.

The amendments passed in the other place this afternoon would seriously undermine all those objectives, for which the House voted last night by a clear majority. I have had reports of the debates in the other place, and the only speaker who addressed the amendments was my noble Friend the Minister for Aviation and Shipping. The rest of the speeches were all extremely general.

Therefore, I propose to address the amendments and explain to the House why we invite the House to reject the amendments.

Mr. Alex Salmond (Banff and Buchan): Will the Minister give way?

Mr. MacGregor: If the hon. Gentleman will listen, I shall tell him the purpose of the amendments. I shall not give way, because we have only one hour. The clock is moving, and I know that many hon. Members wish to speak. There is not much time, and it is important that the House understands what we are discussing. I intend to address that, rather then what was said in the other place.

The first two amendments effectively say that the eligibility of a British Rail bid will be decided at the time of awarding the franchise rather than at the time of invitation for tender. *[Interruption.]* I am not at all surprised that Opposition Members do not wish to hear the arguments on the amendments; they have never done. That is part of the problem. They do not address the real issues. That is exactly why—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The Chair, and I am sure every other hon. Member, is having great difficulty in hearing the Secretary of State. The House must now settle down and get down to the serious debate. Before we do that, I shall take one last point of order from the hon. Member for Walsall, North (Mr. Winnick).

Mr. Winnick: The Minister has referred to the debate in the other place. My point of order is simple and clear. At the moment, we have not had an opportunity to study the arguments by which the other place came to its decision. It makes a total mockery of the democratic process that we should be debating these matters when we are not in a position to know why their Lordships came to the decision that they did, and I am asking you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to rule on that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The House was fully aware of the situation when it decided to debate the amendments forthwith. Mr. MacGregor.

Mr. MacGregor: It was made perfectly clear— *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy speaker: Order. The House must now settle down and listen to the Secretary of State and any other hon. Member who is called to speak.

Mr. MacGregor: My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House made it clear that we might be considering Lords amendments this week when he made his business statement. This is a perfectly normal procedure at this stage of the Parliament. *[Interruption.]* If the hon. Member for Walsall, North (Mr. Winnick) wants to hear the arguments and what this is about, he should listen, instead of Labour Members making that great noise which shows their hypocrisy and how little they care about the arguments. I shall repeat what the amendment does as I am sure that Labour Members and many of my hon. Friends did not hear because of the noise.

Two of our amendments—the third amendment is closely linked to them—relate to the eligibility of a British Rail bid. Under the amendments, the decision of the franchising director as to whether a British Rail bid should be eligible will be made at the time of awarding the franchise, rather than at the time of the invitation to tender, as we proposed. Last night, we had a lengthy debate on this issue.

I shall briefly explain what the effect of the amendments will be. First, most, if not all, management buy-outs will be totally discouraged from bidding for the franchise. If management buy-outs do not know whether British Rail will be made ineligible until after the invitation to tender and after the whole process, they will feel exactly as we agreed last night—that they are being squeezed out and wholly discouraged, and therefore will not incur the expense and the effort to make the bid in the first place.

Secondly, other bidders whom we talked about last night and whom we wish to see bid will be deterred. Hence it will undermine one of the whole purposes of the franchise system and the bidding process, which is to encourage competition for franchises. It will not help—indeed, it will create chaos and confusion. It will not help with the argument that I raised last night—that the amendment from the other place, which we addressed yesterday, will mean that in each individual franchise the people who may be framing the British Rail bid will be the ones who also wanted to do a management buy-out. As I spelt out yesterday, that is a recipe for total chaos and confusion. It will also mean that there will be a great deal of unnecessary cost.

Our amendment is preferable because it avoids all the problems; it encourages management buy-outs and other bidders; it encourages competition for the franchises and it avoids the confusion and unworkability. Indeed, what we now face would work out in practice as simply having a

[Mr. MacGregor]

single monopoly supplier of the services again. The Bill is designed to prevent the dominant single supplier in the public sector.

Mr. Hugh Bayley (York): Will the Secretary of State give way?

Mr. MacGregor: I will not give way, because the debate is a short one.

I must make the point that we have debated these issues on many occasions in the House. We debated them for two hours yesterday, although the vast majority of Labour Members were not present to hear the arguments. We have given much more time to these issues and debated them at greater length than did the other place. Fundamentally, this means that we will not get all the changes and benefits of competition that we are seeing in the former nationalised industries.

Yesterday, some of my hon. Friends pointed out that we were debating this Bill at a time when we saw yet another benefit of privatisation with the reduction in British Telecom prices that had just been announced. We would not get that benefit.

As I explained yesterday, our amendment will still enable British Rail to bid in defined circumstances. I do not need to repeat the arguments but that is one of the big changes that we accepted on the original Peyton amendment. Last night, I argued that, for a variety of reasons, it would be unworkable and would not meet our objectives. That will remain the position with the amendment that has come back from the other place.

The third amendment is closely linked to the other two. It has two main effects—it will delete the promotion of competition for franchises from the criteria which the franchising director must take into account, and insert instead a requirement that the transfer of services to the private sector should not significantly increase the costs of the franchising director. *[Interruption.]* The reaction of Labour Members shows the frivolity with which they approach these matters. It is clear that they do not care and they are not serious.

The amendment has one bad effect and is unnecessary. The bad effect is that it removes the objective of promoting competition for franchises. Since that objective is one of the basic purposes of the reforms that we are undertaking, it cannot be right that we should ask the House to remove it.

The second point is that the amendment argues the case that an award should not significantly increase the cost to the franchising director. That is unnecessary, because the process that we have made clear—the process that is involved in our proposals, which I have talked about on many occasions—means that the franchising director will take into account the costs in any awards that he makes, not least because he will have as his benchmark the historic track record of the existing passenger franchise, the new shadow franchise, when he examines the bids.—*[Interruption.]* I am explaining precisely what it is about so that everyone understands. If the franchising director decides that the bids are not viable or competitive, or involve increased costs, he will not award any franchise and it will return to the existing British Rail operation.

In addition, value for money, which the amendment is supposed to be about, is already one of the franchising director's objectives. So I have explained clearly and precisely that we object to the amendments for the very reasons that, last night, the House passed our amendment by a substantial majority. That is why I invite the House to disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. John Prescott (Kingston upon Hull, East): This controversial Railways Bill, this arrogant Government and this incompetent Secretary of State for Transport have reduced Parliament to a running farce today. It started because the Secretary of State decided to deny this House and the other place the right to debate by introducing a guillotine in the way that he did.

The Government sought a cheap advantage by trying to rush the Bill through the House before proper debate could take place. That is the same charge that we lay against the Lords, who had to discuss Government amendments which were passed only last night and communicated by a reasons committee, of which I am member, which was set up at 2.30 in the Morning. I believe that I am still a member of that committee, which will have to meet again after this debate to tell the other place why we agree or disagree with their amendment. I resign from that committee. I cannot sit on it with any sense of democratic participation in view of the mockery of democracy that has been brought about by the Secretary of State. This is possibly my last appearance as the Opposition spokesman on transport.

Since 1979, there have been 14 Secretaries of State for Transport. I have dealt with three of them, and this Secretary of State is by far the worst. He treats the House with utter contempt. The last three lasted only 18 months, and I believe that this month is this Secretary of State's 18th month. It is about time he went with the others.

The problem that the House faces today arises directly from the amendments and the guillotine procedure with which we were faced yesterday. The guillotine denies us proper and adequate debate on these essential matters. I remind those who attended yesterday's debate of the speech by the right hon. Member for Shropshire, North (Mr. Biffen) about the guillotine procedure. As he is an ex-Leader of the House, we all listen carefully to what he says. He said:

"no House of Commons having even a modest regard for the self-respect of legislators would be presenting them with such an extensive . . . Bill to be dispatched in two days."—[*Official Report*, 2 November 1993; Vol. 231, c. 187.]

9 pm

That is at the heart of the problem that we face today. The problem in the House of Lords is exactly the same. This Government have deployed all the political trickery in the book to seek a political advantage to force down the throats of both Houses a view that they cannot substantiate in debate. They can enforce their view only by means of a guillotine and because of some Members who do not understand what they are doing. That has always characterised this debate. Yesterday my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) described that, properly, as "a constitutional outrage". Any impartial person watching our debates on television might think that that is what is happening.

The argument to be placed against the Government is not only that they are a Government of cheats, but that they treat the House with utter contempt. The dates of our proceedings show that. Monday was a classic example. When the Government tabled a 10 o'clock business motion, it was reasonable to assume that the debate would

be allowed to continue beyond 10 o'clock. The Government tabled that motion to lull the House into a false sense of security, thinking that there would be long enough to debate these matters, only to move a motion at 10 o'clock to close the debate and announce a guillotine. It was all to ensure that the debate would not centre on an examination of the real issues. The same procedures were adopted in the other place when a matter concerning these amendments was discussed, of which we have no record because it took place only hours ago.

The Secretary of State will know that, in the previous guillotined debate, we made great play of the argument of the memorandum of understanding concerning pensioners. The Government signed it prior to the other place voting on pensions, in the belief that the memorandum of understanding meant what the Government said it meant. The Government abrogated their agreement on that, but sought and got the vote in the other place. They got that by trickery. That is what has characterised the whole approach of the Government during these debates.

One of the Lords amendments changes a decision agreed by this House last night. I should remind hon. Members who have not attended our debates on these issues, as the Secretary of State has attempted to, what the issue is about. It is about the right of British Rail to bid for the franchise under the Bill's provisions for the privatisation of British Rail. There were some rebels—perhaps I should not use that word, because they did not materialise. If anybody thought that those amendments meant anything, they would buy anything.

When the Bill was first debated in the House, the Government did not believe that British Rail should have the right to bid for the franchise because, they said, it would blow a hole in the Bill. In other words, they did not want the most competent authority to bid for the facilities. The real intention of the Bill, which is at the heart of these amendments, is to allow the private sector to get its hands on the profitable bits of British Rail at the expense of taxpayers and rail travellers. So the House of Lords considered the matter and then restored British Rail's right to bid.

It is offensive for Ministers to talk about whether the other places gives proper consideration to legislation or whether it has the experience to do so. The two Tory Lords who have been leading the attack on this were both Secretaries of State for Transport in different Tory Governments. One was a chairman of British Rail. I can only assume that they must know what problems face a railway system. Both are Tories, and both have tremendous experience in government and in the management of the railway system. Both take the view that the Government's view is utter nonsense. Lord Peyton described it as "not common sense".

Yesterday, the Government sought to provide a right for British Rail to bid for the franchise, and Back Benchers agreed. Lord Peyton saw that as a small step forward. It was made clear that the person who was to award the contract was to ensure that, if a private bidder bid against British Rail, even if his bid cost more, priority must be given to that private bidder, fixing the market, as the Government have done with the coal industry, to ensure that the private sector wins the argument.

The Lords could not accept that; they rejected it. It is a reasonable proposition to reject, and that is precisely what they did. They have told the House that it is utter nonsense. They have now told us that they do not reject it totally. They welcome the Government's move towards some form of privatisation—something that Opposition Members totally reject—but they have told the Government that, if British Rail is now allowed to bid, it should be allowed to make a bid up to the time of award.

The Lords have also made it clear that they are concerned from our debates that, if a private sector bid comes along that is more costly than the British Rail bid, the taxpayer might get conned. Why does the Secretary of State want an extra £2 billion from the Treasury if it is not plunder to put in the pockets of the private sector to bid?

In Sweden, the national operator has been able to provide a better service, and the franchise director has been able to give it the award. The Secretary of State fears that that will happen here. The Lords amendments before us say, "You will not give the franchise to a private sector bidder if its bid is substantially greater than the British Rail bid." They are even giving a margin of edge to the private sector. They are trying to protect, however, the pockets of the taxpayers. The House of Lords defended the taxpayers when the Government had already given up.

Apparently, Lord Peyton and others do not understand that the purpose of privatisation is to take money out of public funds and put it in the pockets of private industry. That is precisely what it is all about. The Lords have said that they cannot accept that proposition; neither can Members of this House.

The Government say that they stand for employee and management buy-out bids. The real reason is that the 50 private companies that were said to want to bid have not materialised; they have vanished. They have considered the problems and they are scared of what is likely to happen. In desperation, the Government now want to fix it so that a few managers can get into the market and bid against British Rail. That will cause confusion in the British Rail system and conflict in the management, who will divert their energies from running a railway system into making competing bids in the name of privatisation. That is not the way to run a railway system.

The Lords amendment is right. We disagree about the principle of privatisation, but they are trying to limit the damage and protect the interests of the taxpayer. One would have thought that the Secretary of State and Conservative Members would have been worried, but no; they will troop into those Lobbies again today to tell the House of Lords that they totally reject their amendment.

That is the issue. It is a matter of substance. Tonight we are debating the credibility of the Secretary of State, the arrogance of the Government and an affront to democracy. That is why we shall oppose the Government's amendment tonight.

Sir David Mitchell (Hampshire, North-West): The Lords amendment is a thinly veiled attempt by Lord Peyton to destroy the Government's rail privatisation measure in its entirety. Successful franchising is an essential part of the Bill. Railtrack will remain in the public sector. All of the system that is not franchised will remain in the public sector. It is on the franchising front only that the private sector becomes involved. Therefore, the benefits of this massive Bill rely on the success of franchising.

Franchising will bring three benefits to the public: first culture, secondly competition and thirdly cash. By "culture", I mean the interjection of the enterprise culture that has been so desperately missing from British Rail's

[Sir David Mitchell]

activities, and the wind of change that that will bring to the whole of the enterprise. By "competition", I mean that there will be astonishment when several bidders fight each other for the minimum amount of subsidy that they require to operate the service. That experience has been offered elsewhere in the transport world and will undoubtedly repeat itself if we are successful in enacting the Bill.

The third benefit is cash to get rid of the Treasury's dead hand and enable those people to go to the markets for money and increase their investment in a way which the Treasury would never permit. Those benefits would be denied if the Lords amendments were accepted and the benefits of franchising were taken away.

Bids for franchises will come from four main sources: management buy-outs; international rail engineering companies; existing transport companies such as P and O and Virgin; and City-backed entrepreneurs. None of those would bid if the amendments were accepted, because the amendments would destroy effective bidding by the private sector, which would have to bid against British Rail's unfettered right to bid. Only once that had happened would the franchise director assess the bids and question whether British Rail's bid should be barred.

On that basis, there would be no bids, because there would be no level playing field. Bidders would be scared off by British Rail's financial muscle, the fear of deliberate artificial cross-subsidisation, the knowledge that British Rail would not know whether it was cross-subsidising, and British Rail's access to cheap public money, which would not be available to other franchise bidders.

The amendments would put a tourniquet around the throats of managers considering a bid. None of them would dare to bid against his employer, knowing that afterwards he might lose his job and that his job would be on the line the whole time that he was preparing his bid.

Will my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State be wary of amendments that have obviously been drafted by British Rail's lawyers for British Rail's benefit and sponsored in the Lords by past British Rail management? I go further and say that it is improper for British Rail to use public money to campaign against a Government programme approved by the electors.

Mr. Hugh Bayley (York): The Secretary of State's speech contained three fatal errors. First, he said that, because we have spent hundreds of hours debating this Bill, we need not debate it any longer. But we have never debated this proposal from the Lords. It has never come before either House until today.

Secondly, the amendment allows the franchising director to rule out absolutely any BR bid unless it is substantially cheaper than private sector bids. What possible objection could there be to that?

Thirdly, he said that there would be a conflict of interests if BR managers put together a management buy-out bid in competition with BR, when BR were also bidding. But a conflict of interests will exist if those managers challenge their company by submitting an alternative bid while remaining in the company. If there is to be a level playing field, private sector firms will have to bid from outside BR. The managers who want to opt out of BR should prepare their bids from outside and leave BR free of interference from outsiders to put together its own bid.

The Government intend to vote down the Lords amendment for just one reason: they are afraid of the competition that BR would bring. They are afraid that, if BR is allowed to bid, it will provide better and cheaper services for the public. They are determined to destroy that possibility by means of their privatisation measure.

Mr. Tim Rathbone (Lewes): The opening speech of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) slid into personal invective, which is the last resort of anyone without a rational argument on which to rely. If we needed further confirmation of the need for that guillotine motion, which I found unfortunate, the atrocious behaviour of Opposition Members provides it.

We must remind ourselves and the other place that yesterday's House of Commons majority of 34 confirmed the improvement that has been made to the Bill throughout its consideration on the Floor of the House of Commons, in Committee and in reaction to the previous set of Lords amendments.

The other place, however, has clearly misunderstood those changes—perhaps because it did not have time to consider them. I hope that it is considering them now. Certainly it was not given time to debate them, in contrast with the time allowed for discussion of the amendments tabled by my right hon. Friend and his colleagues.

The Lords amendment undercuts the whole principle of the level playing field to which numerous speakers on both sides of the House referred in yesterday's debate. It also undercuts true competition between the franchises. Such competition must be in the interests of more efficient rail services, which are more cost-effective for the taxpayer.

9.15 pm

I believe that a misunderstanding existed in all their Lordships' minds when they voted last night. That was confirmed by the comment made by Lord Marsh in a broadcast at 6 o'clock this evening. I heard what he said, and I was not relying on annunciator screens or television sets—I was there when he said it. He said that, under the House of Commons amendment, the SNCF, the German Bundesbahn or any other foreign railway could bid for a franchise while British Rail could not, but that is not true. The whole point of the amendments that we discussed yesterday was that British Rail would be allowed to bid, except——

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Rathbone: No, I will not give way. I hope that other hon. Members will have a chance to speak later.

British Rail will have a chance to bid, except when the franchising director believes that that is not in the interest of competition. That is the measure that we passed yesterday, and that is what went down the Corridor earlier today.

I believe that Ministers and the House considered the so-called Peyton amendments, as their Lordships wanted them to do. They concluded that those amendments themselves required amendment, made the necessary changes, and passed them back to their Lordships for consideration. I believe that we should pass them back yet again in a few moments' time.

Mr. Nick Harvey (North Devon): The Government face this problem for the first time in 16 years entirely because of their own incompetence and obstinacy. Their handling of the Bill has been deplorable throughout its

passage. They have tabled so many amendments to their own amendments—tabling them in Committee when the ink was hardly wet on the first lot—that they have almost used up an entire Amazonian rain forest.

There was a time when I believed that, however misguided and inherently evil Conservative Members might be, they at least understood how to run things, and were technically competent. I have come to realise that I completely misjudged them. They stand before the country exposed as the shambolic rabble that they undoubtedly are.

When the public learn of this evening's events, and the passage of this measure from one end of the corridor to the other, they will be in no doubt about who is speaking for the nation. Members of the other place come in without deferring to the Whips, and with no hope of promotion; they do not even need gongs, because most already have them. We have been reduced to observing the spectacle of those people speaking for the nation, not those who speak in this Chamber—the men of straw on the Conservative Benches who depend on the Whips for their prospects of promotion and patronage.

That is the position to which we have been reduced by the Government's shambolic conduct and a ridiculous measure which successive Secretaries of State for Transport have thought better than to introduce. The present Secretary of State, however, has insisted on pushing it through, at a deplorable cost to democracy and to his own electoral fortune. The Government will pay for that at the ballot box.

Mr. Brian Wilson (Cunninghame, North): I must make one small correction before I proceed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I received the news of the Government's defeat this afternoon, and I raised a point of order with Madam Speaker on the fact that the defeat had been on the pensions issue. Sadly, the defeat was not on the pensions issue, but on the franchise issue. I apologise for the fact that I inadvertently misled Madam Speaker this afternoon. That was the first time in the process of the Bill that I had a wrong piece of information. I think the whole of the British press were surprised when I said that the Government had been defeated on pensions rather than the franchises.

It was a glorious victory, however, which has thrown the Bill into total chaos and confusion and led to tonight's debate. It is the Secretary of State who has created the chaos and confusion——

Mr. Stephen Milligan (Eastleigh): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Wilson: Certainly not. When the hon. Gentleman has the guts to vote for the pensioners in the Eastleigh works, I will give way to him.

Today's events represent the final humiliation for the Bill and for the Secretary of State and confirmation of the reality that there is no majority for the Bill in the country, where polls have revealed that opposition to it stands at 83 per cent. There is no majority for the Bill in the leader columns of the Tory press or in Tory local authorities—even though there are not many of those left—and there is no majority for it among British Rail managers, 90 per cent. of whom have expressed their opposition to it, contrary to the misrepresentation by the Secretary of State.

What we have seen tonight has been a constitutional outrage—I do not know the terminology used on these occasions—and a performance typical and worthy of the Government. Not only has the House and its right to debate been trampled on; at the same time, the right to debate and consider legislation along the Corridor have been trampled on here. Some hon. Members who have been here for 30 years say that they have never seen anything like it; I have heard some Lords say that they have been in the other place for 70 years and never seen anything like it.

The Secretary of State again adduces the interests of railway managers. He insists that they want to run private railways, in spite of the arguments, the statistics and the evidence of a lack of positive support for that. One of the greatest wrongs committed by the Secretary of State is to misrepresent the railway managers. He is driving them into a position of becoming involved in buy-out bids, forcing them into taking out mortgages on their homes to take financial risks. He does not even have the guts to admit that he is doing that for political reasons. He is persistently taking in vain the names of people who, by statute and regulation, he forbids to answer back.

In the weeks ahead, I challenge the Secretary of State to tell the chairman of British Rail that all rail managers are to be free to speak openly about their views on this legislation and the appropriateness of management buy-outs. He will find that the 90 per cent. who have told the survey that they are opposed to rail privatisation will come to the fore. It is a disgrace to drive people into management buy-outs as a way of protecting their employment, and then to persist in the falsehood that the majority are anxious to do that.

There are many Tory voters among the railway managers, but the Opposition will continue to speak for the 90 per cent. of them who do not want anything to do with these buy-outs. The Government can speak for the 10 per cent. who do. We shall speak for the 90 per cent. of railway managers who want to continue to run a safe, integrated public railway—many of whom are to be denied the right to do so.

The hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) seemed, in his attempt to rationalise his own behaviour, under a serious misapprehension about what is in the Bill. Let there be no doubt: the state railways of Germany, France, Ireland and other countries will be in a position superior to that of British Rail if they choose to bid for BR franchises. None of those state railways will be subject to the four conditions that can be used by the franchise director to preclude British Rail involvement. [HON. MEMBERS: "Wrong."] I repeat that none of them will be subject to the conditions that can be used under the Secretary of State's direction to preclude BR's involvement.

There is a genuine question of competition at stake. No longer can Tory Ministers make up the rules as they go along. At some point they must answer to the laws of competition within a European context. One of the fixes in which the Government are engaging to try to encourage what remnant of private interest there may be is thus in contravention of European law——

Mr. Rathbone: The hon. Gentleman does not understand the matter any better than the Lords do. The Bill will say that British Rail can enter into these franchises; it is only when there is no competition that the franchise director steps in.

Mr. Wilson: I think that Lord Peyton and Lord Marsh, not to mention hon. Members here who understand the

[Mr. Wilson]

Bill, have nothing to gain and nothing to hide—unlike those who engaged in a rebellion that collapsed before extracting a price.

The new Lords amendment offered the genuine compromise which the hon. Member for Lewes and others like him failed to obtain. I do not like the amendment, in the sense that British Rail could still be the lowest bidder but be excluded from a franchise by the director. At least that represented a major advance, however, in that British Rail would have a right to bid in every instance. Under what the Government continue to propose, BR will often be excluded—not because it is not good enough, but because Ministers know that if it is allowed to bid it will succeed.

The arguments will go on outside this House. The Government have lost the argument. They have lost their dignity and their credibility on this Bill. Today we read of the latest attempt to win over public support for the Bill. We are told that the Department of Transport plans to send a leaflet to every house in the country explaining the benefits of rail privatisation. Millions of pounds that could be used to run trains will be spent on a propaganda battle that the Government have already lost. The only result could be another threat to rail traffic: leaflets on the track.

The hon. Member for Hampshire, North-West (Sir D. Mitchell) spoke of a tourniquet around the throats of railway managers who want to bid. I have always understood that the purpose of a tourniquet is to stop bleeding and save lives. Rather, this is a knife in the back of British Rail, and the Government have placed it there tonight.

The debate goes on. It is understood in the country that rail privatisation equals higher fares, fewer services, and the loss of routes, of network benefits and of everything about the railway system that is widely understood in this country. The has-beens and never-weres on the Tory Benches can vote for the Government tonight and overturn the Lords amendment, but they will have to live with the consequences of their actions. Those consequences will be seen next year in the local government and European elections—and ultimately in the general election campaign, in which the future of the railways will play a major part.

Conservative Members can vote down the Lords amendment, but they cannot defeat the arguments. They have lost those arguments in the House. In the country, rail privatisation is discredited. This is the last hurrah for the Railways Bill. The battle goes on in the country from now on.

The Minister for Public Transport (Mr. Roger Freeman): I am happy to live with the consequences of the Railways Act, as it will become. I firmly believe, as does my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, that it will improve the quality of rail services, and that is the object of the exercise. Interestingly enough, tonight we have heard no reference whatsoever to passengers.

The purpose of the Bill is to improve the quality of service to passengers. It is not about preserving monopolies or preserving the rights of trade unions; it is about improving service to passengers.

The hon. Member for Cunninghame, North (Mr. Wilson) referred to a matter that was raised in another place. Let me deal with it now. There is no question of printing 20 million leaflets to distribute to every household in the country. Hon. Members should not believe what they read in *The Guardian;* there are no such plans.

The hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley) said that we cannot substantiate in debate our arguments. Not only have we had 190 hours of debate, but we have dealt with the issues at great length. We spent two and a half hours on amendment No. 31 and we won by a majority of 34. We debated specific issues concerning the responsibility of the franchising director. *[Interruption.]* Yes, we did. Perhaps the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent, North (Ms Walley) was not listening to the debate.

9.30 pm

We discussed when the franchising director would exercise his responsibilities under clause 22 in order to disqualify British Rail from bidding in certain circumstances.

I speak for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport—*[Interruption.]* I am trying to make a serious point.

In the Bill that we are considering tonight and when it receives Royal Assent, British Rail will be able to bid. My right hon. Friend and I firmly believe that British Rail——

Mr. George Stevenson (Stoke-on-Trent, South): Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Freeman: No. I was given only seven minutes and I must make my points.

British Rail will be allowed to bid in certain circumstances and it will undoubtedly win franchises. That was the intention of the House of Lords. We responded constructively and my right hon. Friend and I believe that that will happen.

Clause 22 gives the franchising director, at his own discretion, the right to determine, at the time of issuing the invitation to bid, whether British Rail is to be allowed to be one of those bidders.

The criteria for deciding whether British Rail should bid are clear. The franchising director has to decide whether allowing British Rail to bid would not promote the interests of management-employee buy-out bids that might confound new entry to the railway industry and would not in any way reduce the dominance of one supplier to the railway industry. That is what clause 22 said.

The Lords amendment that deletes "issue invitations to tender" and inserts "award a franchise" is wrong. We debated it at great length and there are two consequences that I believe the House will understand when it votes in a few minutes' time and use as reasons for rejecting the Lords amendments.

First, if the franchising director is allowed to determine that British Rail should not be a bidder at the time of awarding the franchise, that puts British Rail management in a hopeless position. Are they preparing a bid themselves —a management and employee buy-out bid—or are they preparing a bid for British Rail corporate? It is a hopeless position and the direct consequence of the Lords amendments would be to prevent management-employee bids either being prepared or bidding.

Mr. John Gunnell (Morley and Leeds, South): Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Freeman: No. Let me deal with the second consequence of the Lords amendments which we reject.

Mr. Derek Enright (Hemsworth): Get on to the passengers.

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) did not refer to passengers at all. *[Interruption.]* No, he did not. We are motivated by one clear aim—to improve the quality of service for the passengers.

The second reason why we must reject the Lords amendments is that, if the franchising director allows British Rail to prepare bids in all circumstances and then decides to disqualify it at the time of awarding the franchise—*[Interruption.]* I am speaking from the heart and the head also.

If we allow the franchising director to disqualify British Rail only at the final moment, at the award of the franchise, that would put off private sector bidders. They would undoubtedly be deterred by the cost and expense of preparing a bid, because they would face a state-owned company that is at present a monopoly. The net effect of the Lords amendment would be to deny the principal purpose of the Bill, which is to encourage and promote private sector interest in running passenger railways. That is what is in the Bill, and it is the prime purpose of our reforms—to introduce the benefits of additional capital and innovation.

The Opposition's real motivation tonight is nothing to do with the amendment; they are determined to preserve British Rail's monopoly. The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East threatened to sack British Rail managers who participated in the bidding process, and the hon. Member for Cunninghame, North said that he would renationalise the rail industry. The Opposition are determined to do one thing, and the one thing alone—to preserve British Rail's monopoly. But we are interested in promoting the interests of passengers. I commend what my right hon. Friend said, and urge the House to reject the Lords amendment.

Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment:—

The House proceeded to a Division:—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. There appears to be some delay in the Lobby. Will the Serjeant at Arms please investigate?

Mr. Bob Dunn (Dartford) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If this practice of delay in the No Lobby continues, can those responsible be named?

The House having divided: Ayes 301, Noes 260.

Division No. 395] **[9.35 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick

Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Robert G. Hughes and Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Sheffld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCrea, Rev William
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Oiner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John

Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Alan Meale and
Mr. John Spellar

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment to a Commons amendment in lieu of a Lords amendment: 1B, in subsection (4) line 6, leave out from ("for") to end of subsection and insert ("selection as the franchisee.").

Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment:—

The House divided: Ayes 289, Noes 261.

Division No. 396] **[9.55 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliffe)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*

Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Robert G. Hughes and
Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Eggar, Tim
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCrea, Rev William
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tipping, Paddy

Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Dennis Turner and
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment:—

The House proceeded to a division—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It has been reported to me that the wrong teller is in the Aye Lobby. This Division is off. I will put the Question again.

Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment:—

The House proceeded to a division—

Mr. Gyles Brandreth (City of Chester) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It will have come to your attention that, during the course of this evening's debate, a number of hon. Members have been using delaying tactics in both the Lobbies. Indeed, you called the Serjeant at Arms to clear the Lobbies so that we could get on with the business of the House. Have you invited the Serjeant at Arms to note who those hon. Members are?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No, I have not.

Mr. Brandreth: Further to that point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If you have not considered doing so, and as the disruption is continuing, will you consider that possibility, because it is a little obstructive when we wish to proceed with the business before us?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have no plans to do so.

Mr. Ernie Ross (Dundee, West) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am extremely concerned. I am not sure whether I have been shunted into a siding, or whether I am still on the track. What happened in the last Division? Did a Conservative Member attempt to act as a Teller and vote at the same time?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that we are still on the track, and I am sure that he will eventually find out what happened.

Mr. James Paice (Cambridgeshire, South-East) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I understand that, yet again, the Aye Lobby—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I cannot deal with points of order unless I can hear them.

Mr. Paice: I understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Aye Lobby is empty yet again; yet proceedings in the No Lobby are again being delayed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Gentleman can safely leave the matter in my hands.

Mr. Mark Robinson (Somerton and Frome) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There still seems to be a blockage in the No Lobby.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am well aware of the situation.

Later—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There seems to be some delay in the No Lobby. I will send the Serjeant at Arms to investigate.

The House having divided: Ayes 301, Noes 258.

Division No. 397] **[10.20 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*

Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Robert G. Hughes and
Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Liverpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John

McAvoy, Thomas
McCrea, Rev William
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Eric Illsley and
Mr. John Spellar

Question accordingly agreed to.

Motion made, and Question,

That a Committee be appointed to draw up reasons to be assigned to the Lords for disagreeing to their amendments to the amendment proposed by the Commons in lieu of amendment No. 31; that Mr. Michael Brown, Mr. Alex Carlile, Mr. Roger Freeman, Mr. Secretary MacGregor and Mr. Brian Wilson be the members of the Committee; that three be the quorum; that the Committee do withdraw immediately.—*[Mr. MacGregor.]*

put forthwith pursuant to Order [2 November]:—

The House proceeded to a Division—

Madam Speaker: Serjeant, would you inspect the No Lobby? I understand that there is a blockage there, and I want it removed immediately.

Mr. John Marshall (Hendon, South): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I apologise for the headgear, but I understand——

Madam Speaker: Order. When I am in the Chair, the hon. Gentleman must wear a hat. He will look far more handsome.

Mr. Marshall *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I understand that there are now blockages in both Lobbies.

Madam Speaker: That makes it even, then. Will the Serjeant at Arms inspect the Aye Lobby?

Mr. Alun Michael (Cardiff, South and Penarth) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Earlier tonight the question was asked why the bells did not ring when an earlier Division was called. It appears that the Serjeant at Arms is able to go into the Lobbies to ask Members to come out, but not to sort out why the bells did not ring or say whether they will ring on future occasions. Is it not appropriate that the Serjeant at Arms should be able to tell us that the bells will ring when they should so that everyone is aware when the Division is called?

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman should not trouble himself, because I intend to find out tomorrow whether the bells rang or not.

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I wish to make the point that yesterday I was accused of constitutional outrage for moving a timetable motion on this Bill. It should be registered that what we are experiencing tonight is a constitutional outrage—*[Interruption]*—and I hope that you will decide to have the matter thoroughly investigated.

Madam Speaker: As the right hon. Gentleman and the House are aware, I am always prepared to defend this House nationally and internationally when it is robust and when it has quality debate and quality argument. I cannot defend it when it is in a state of disorder.

The House having divided: Ayes 315, Noes 244.

Division No. 398] **[10.42**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Alton, David
Amess, David
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcl)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Harvey, Nick
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael

Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
Lynne, Ms Liz
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
Maclennan, Robert
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Rendel, David
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Tyler, Paul
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Wallace, James
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Robert G. Hughes and Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harman, Ms Harriet
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCrea, Rev William
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul

O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Oiner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'ld'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Tipping, Paddy
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Dennis Turner and
Mr. Eric Illsley.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Beverages (VAT)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

That the Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993 (S.I., 1993, No. 2498), which was laid before this House on 18th October, be approved.—*[Mr. Conway.]*

11.1 pm

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. [HON. MEMBERS: "Oh, no."] It is rather important that hon. Members should appreciate this. I submit that it is not in order for the House to consider this VAT order because the appropriate papers are not in legible form and are not available to hon. Members.

The order was considered only yesterday by a Standing Committee and it appears to be designed to apply VAT at 17·5 per cent. to fresh orange juice. That would increase the price of a litre bottle of this important national food by——

Madam Speaker: Order. I understand the hon. Gentleman's concern about the matter and I am prepared to listen to a point of order, but not to an argument. The motion is not debatable. If the hon. Gentleman puts a point of order to me, I will deal with it.

Sir Teddy Taylor: I was simply pointing out that the order is rather important.

The order is not printed in the normal form. It appears to have been typed and photocopied. At the foot of the explanatory note, there is a reference to a paragraph of schedule 6 of a Finance Act the date of which cannot be deciphered. Another document is referred to as 1988/507, but its title is also illegible. The date of the order cannot be read, apart from the fact that it is 1993.

I understand that matters can be considered by the House only if the appropriate papers are provided to hon. Members. I suggest that we cannot consider the VAT order when the appropriate papers cannot be read in some parts and when the references cannot be read. I supplied your office with a copy of the order and I suggest that it is not in accordance with the proceedings of the House if hon. Members are asked to vote on a document that cannot be read properly.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman has made the point himself. The document was considered yesterday by a Statutory Instruments Committee. I realise that it is a bit fingerprinted and mucky, but the Chairman of the Committee and the Committee members could understand it. If the hon. Gentleman really tried hard, I am sure that he could manage to read it.

Question put:—

The House proceeded to a Division—

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey) *(seated and covered):* On a point of order, Madam Speaker. As you know, there is a vote in progress and, as you also know, behind you the Committee is drawing up the reasons for our disagreement to send to the other place. Apparently, the members of that Committee are not being allowed out to vote in this Division and, apparently, there is coming and going and toing and froing of people not on the Committee who are requesting the attendance of the Clerk of the House and, therefore, I assume, interfering with that Committee's right to make its decisions. All that I am seeking is a ruling that, if any member of the Committee should want to vote, the Committee should adjourn to

allow them to do so, and, secondly, that the Committee be allowed to carry on its business without interference from other hon. Members or Officers of the House.

Madam Speaker: I do not interfere in the affairs of the Committee, but I am very surprised that any Member should be attempting to enter the room in which the Committee is deliberating. Far be it from me to try to enter that room. I hope that if any Members try to get in there they will be turned out.

The House having divided: Ayes 292, Noes 247.

Division No. 399] **[11.08 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir A. *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David

Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Timothy Wood and
Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Bradley, Keith
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCrea, Rev William
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Eric Illsley and
Mr. Andrew Mackinlay.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Mr. Eric Illsley (Barnsley, Central): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. During the previous Division, three Clerks were in the Aye Lobby, two recording the vote and one whose presence in the Lobby was not explained. I have raised the matter with the Clerk at the Table and the Clerk of the House, but I have been given no explanation of why the third Clerk should have been present in the Aye Lobby during a Division. The presence of a third Clerk, or anyone who should not have been in that Lobby, giving advice or whatever, tends to negate the value of that Division.

Madam Speaker: Of course the Division is not negated. I will make inquiries to find out precisely what took place.

Members' Salaries

11.24 pm

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): I beg to move,

That, in the opinion of this House, the following provision should be made with respect to the salaries of Members of this House—

(1) In respect of service in 1994—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate of £31,687; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate of £23,854.

(2) In respect of service in 1995—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the sum of £32,538 but increased by the relevant percentage for that year; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the sum of £24,495 but increased by the relevant percentage for that year.

(3) In respect of service in any subsequent year—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the salary of an ordinary Member for the preceding year but increased by the relevant percentage for that subsequent year; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the salary of a salaried Member for the preceding year but increased by the relevant percentage for that subsequent year.

(4) For the purposes of this Resolution—
  (a) an ordinary Member is a Member of this House other than a salaried Member;
  (b) a salaried Member is an Officer of this House or any Member of this House receiving a salary under the Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975 or a pension under section 26 of the Parliamentary and other Pensions Act 1972; and
  (c) the relevant percentage for any year ("the relevant year") is the percentage by which, as a result of any pay settlement in the preceding year and any stage taking effect in that year of an earlier pay settlement, the average annual salary (disregarding allowances) on 1st January in the relevant year of the persons covered by the 1992 Pay Agreement for Grades 5 to 7 has increased compared with that average on 1st January in the preceding year.

Madam Speaker: I have to tell the House that all the amendments on the Order Paper may be referred to in the debate, but I have selected only amendment (a) in the name of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field).

Mr. Newton: I understand that it will be convenient to discuss the other two motions on the Order Paper:

That the following provision should be made with respect to the salaries of Members of this House—

(1) In respect of service in 1994—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate of £31,687; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate of £23,854.

(2) In respect of service in 1995—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the sum of £32,538 but increased by the relevant percentage for that year; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the sum of £24,495 but increased by the relevant percentage for that year.

(3) In respect of service in any subsequent year—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the salary of an ordinary Member for the preceding year but increased by the relevant percentage for that subsequent year; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the salary of a salaried Member for the preceding year but increased by the relevant percentage for that subsequent year.

(4) For the purposes of this Resolution—
  (a) an ordinary Member is a Member of this House other than a salaried Member;
  (b) a salaried Member is an Officer of this House or any Member of this House receiving a salary under the Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975 or a pension under section 26 of the Parliamentary and other Pensions Act 1972; and
  (c) the relevant percentage for any year ("the relevant year") is the percentage by which, as a result of any pay settlement in the preceding year and any stage taking effect in that year of an earlier pay settlement, the average annual salary (disregarding allowances) on 1st January in the relevant year of the persons covered by the 1992 Pay Agreement for Grades 5 to 7 has increased compared with that average on 1st January in the preceding year.

That the draft Ministerial and other Salaries Order 1993, which was laid before this House on 1st November, be approved.

I should first remind the House briefly of the background from our debate just under a year ago, on 25 November 1992, when the House agreed that there should be no pay increase for Members of Parliament in January 1993.

In that debate, I gave two clear undertakings, which were, I think, of importance to Members in coming to their decision at that time. The first was that the Government accepted the case for an automatic linkage with the civil service and would seek to re-establish it once the revised structure of civil service pay had been settled. The second was that the Government did not intend that Members should be permanently disadvantaged by the loss of the 3·9 per cent. awarded to civil servants in August 1992, which Members could in normal circumstances have expected to receive in January 1993.

In framing the proposals that I am putting to the House today, I have sought to fulfil those commitments, while at the same time imposing a significant constraint on the pay of Members, in line with the Government's approach to public sector pay. Thus, the realignment of Members' pay will take place over a period of two years, with the settlement for 1995 bringing Members in line with the civil servants with whom they were formerly linked.

The purpose of the motions is to honour the undertakings given, but to do so in a way which not only acknowledges the continued need for restraint. In fact—this is a point to which I shall return—taking the period from the end of 1992 to the beginning of 1995 as a whole, the motions ask Members to accept greater, not less, restraint than has been asked of civil servants and, indeed, others in the public sector.

Before returning to that point, let me outline the provisions of the motions. The first two deal with the pay of Members, including the reduced parliamentary pay of those who also receive a salary under the Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975. That latter category covers not only all Ministers but the Leader of the Opposition; the Opposition Chief Whip; the Opposition Deupty Chief Whip; you, Madam Speaker; my right hon. Friend the Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Sir E. Heath) who, as a former Prime Minister, is in receipt of a pension under section 26 of the Parliamentary and Other Pensions Act 1972; the Chairman of Ways and Means; and the two Deputy Speakers.

The motions provide that, in January 1994, the full parliamentary salary should be increased from £30,854 to £31,687, and the reduced parliamentary salary from £23,227 to £23,854, both representing an increase of 2·7 per cent. They further propose that, in January 1995, the full parliamentary salary should be increased to £32,538,

[Mr. Newton]

and the reduced parliamentary salary to £24,495—in both cases an increase of 2·68 per cent. on the 1994 salary—together with an amount reflecting the pay settlement for civil service grades 5 to 7 in the forthcoming year. Thus, automatic linkage with civil service pay increases would be re-established in January 1995, after a two-year break. The same automatic linkage would then apply in each year thereafter, without the need for further resolution of the House.

The third motion concerns the Ministerial and Other Salaries Order which is also before the House. This applies the same percentage increase in salary in 1994 as for Members, except that Ministers in the other place who are not in receipt of a parliamentary salary would receive an increase in salary equivalent in cash terms to the increase experienced by their counterparts in this House.

The order relating to Ministers can, under the terms of the Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975, deal only with 1994. However, I should make it clear to the House that the Government think that the right course henceforth is for the salaries of Ministers and the others whom I mentioned earlier to be dealt with on exactly the same basis as Members—that is to say, in effect linked to the percentage increases in the average salaries of civil service grades 5 to 7.

Before coming back to what Members will no doubt see as the main issue, I should perhaps explain in a little more detail the reasons for proposing this new form of linkage, the basis of it, and the way in which it is expected to operate.

As I said last year, the need for a new resolution arises from the move to performance-related pay in the civil service, which had the effect of making the previously established linkage—89 per cent. of the national scale maximum for grade 6 civil servants—no longer a reliable one.

That is because, whereas in the past a settlement of a certain percentage for grades 5 to 7 was applied evenly to all points on the salary scale, so that the top, middle and bottom of the scale progressed in the same proportions, under the new arrangements different points of the new pay range can move at different rates. In the current year, for example, the 1·5 per cent. award has been applied so that the bottom of the scale remains static while the maximum payable will increase by 8 per cent. In later years, a quite different pattern could occur. So linkage to a notional point on the range in the new system could produce uplifts markedly higher or lower than the overall award, which, in their effects on Members of Parliament, would be virtually arbitrary.

Some confusion has been caused by the current pay arrangements for grades 5 to 7 still showing the old scale maximum, and some Members have suggested to me that this could continue to be used. However, this point on the scale is being used only as part of the assimilation arrangements in respect of some reserved rights under the old system, will continue only for a short period and is therefore of no value for the permanent purpose which Members of Parliament wish to see restored.

What the Government are therefore proposing is a measure that would not link Members to a specific point, but would ensure that Members' pay progressed in line with the average settlement for grades 5 to 7. The linkage would be with the average increase in pay experienced by grades 5 to 7 as a result of their pay settlement, and is the closest equivalent to the old linkage available under the new system.

Thus, as part of the return to parity with civil servants in January 1995, and in each January thereafter, Members will receive a pay award worth the same as that received the previous August by grades 5 to 7 under their pay agreement. Members will note from the resolution that they would also receive any element of staging awarded during the year. The cost of the grades 5 to 7 award, expressed as a percentage of the total pay bill, will be issued in a letter to civil service establishment officers soon after the settlement, and the same percentage would be used to uprate Members' pay. In other words, we shall then have a link which covers a broader range of civil service grades, which is durable and which can be used for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Jeff Rooker (Birmingham, Perry Barr): That being so, will the Leader of the House take a few minutes to explain why there should be a linkage mechanism or formula that applies to Members of this House which is superior to any other pay formula affecting anyone in the public service? As everybody knows, there is one group of workers who have such a specific, dedicated fomula and it was to be overturned—the firefighters. Although that did not happen, there was such a specific formula. Why should the linkage for our salaries be superior to any other linkage operating in the public sector? Could he also say—*[Interruption.]* No, I will not ask my other question.

Mr. Newton: I do not fully understand how the hon. Gentleman can make that point when the basic proposition is that, far from being superior to what is proposed for other parts of the public sector, the whole point is to ensure that our salaries are specifically and directly linked to what happens across three grades of the Civil Service on average. That is clear, and cannot be presented as the hon. Gentleman suggested.

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I apologise to the Leader of the House for intervening, but can a message be sent to the Reasons Committee to say that they need not hurry as their Lordships have risen for the day?

Madam Speaker: That is not a point of order for me.

Mr. Newton: I now return, as I said earlier that I would, to what the figures that we are proposing to ask of Members, bearing in mind the crucial fact that, unlike any other group in the public sector, they have had no pay increase whatever since January 1992, and that the proper comparisons are with what has happened elsewhere over a period of not one year but two.

Mr. Jeremy Corbyn (Islington, North): Before the Leader of the House goes further, what consideration has he given to the widely reported cases of Members, mainly those behind him, who double or treble their salaries through consultancies and directorships, solely on the basis of being a Member of this House? Is it not time that all Members had one full-time job—that of being a Member of Parliament? Members should be expected to live on that salary and no other, in the interests of democracy and public decency.

Mr. Newton: The subject which the hon. Gentleman raises is touched on in one of the amendments which you, Madam Speaker, said could be discussed during the debate, and the hon. Gentleman will doubtless seek to make a speech if he catches your eye. I do not intend to let my speech be diverted from what I consider are the main issues to the sort of point which he has raised.

Although we do not yet know the precise increase in the retail price index in the period from January 1992 to next January when the 2·7 per cent. increase proposed in the motion would take effect, we know that it is already 4·6 per cent. higher in September than when Members' present pay was set. So it is simply not true to say that the increase exceeds inflation in the relevant period. It is significantly less.

The key points are, first, that Members received no pay increase in 1993, and that their current salary is based on an award made to grade 6 civil servants as long ago as August 1991. Secondly, civil servants have over the same period received two settlements totalling 5·45 per cent. —3·9 per cent. in August 1992 and 1·5 per cent. under pay restraint in August 1993. Thirdly, the 2·7 per cent. now proposed for January 1994 is only half that amount. Indeed, under these proposals Members will not receive the remainder of the increase that civil servants received in 1992 until January 1995. Fourthly, when parity is finally restored in January 1995, Members will have experienced exactly the same overall restraint over the two years 1993 and 1994. They will have reached exactly the same point of increase as civil servants—no more and no less.

However, because the increases received by Members will have lagged significantly behind their civil service comparators during that period, they will have lost permanently—I need to put this uncomfortable fact to the House—some £2,000 each, compared to what they would have received had normal arrangements applied, and compared to what their civil service comparators actually received.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Newton: I am bringing my speech to a conclusion, and many hon. Members will wish to contribute to the debate.

We are asking not for less constraint but for more. Our proposals are a fair and balanced compromise between the commitments given to Members last year, the undoubted need for continuing pay restraint, and the desirability of re-establishing a clear and sustainable mechanism for determining Members' pay in the future. I commend them to the House.

11.39 pm

Mrs. Margaret Beckett (Derby, South): As all hon. Members know, this is an issue for the House as a whole, and one on which there will be a free vote. It is for each hon. Member to make his or her own decision. I shall be as brief as I can, in order to allow those who wish to speak to do so.

As the Leader of the House properly pointed out, last year the Government announced a public-sector pay freeze which was opposed by many Opposition Members—especially because some of the most highly paid public servants were not being affected in the same way. We also expressed concern about the breaking of the existing link with civil service pay, for which the House had voted repeatedly.

I welcome—on behalf, I think, of many hon. Members on both sides of the House—the announcement that some form of linkage will be restored. Whatever the problems with the present system, I cannot think that it is not superior to the previous system, under which hon. Members were required to make an inevitably somewhat arbitrary decision every year.

I admit to some nervousness about having to accept that the Government have changed the form of the link in case the result of the previous formula proved unacceptable; but that is simply to put down a marker for a precedent that might be being set. It would negate the purpose of the link if we all accepted that, every time the result did not suit the Government, they could change the link. In no sense am I arguing for the award of a larger sum than that contained in the settlement; however, I think it right to touch briefly on what was said by the Leader of the House, and to allude to what are, after all, the facts.

The pay of Members of Parliament has been frozen for two years. It has not increased since the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992. As the Leader of the House pointed out, over that period inflation had risen by 5·4 per cent. The Government's proposal is for half that inflation rate to be recognised this year, and for the other half to be recognised in January 1995. That is not, as most commentators seem to have suggested, an increase above the rate of inflation; it is—properly, in the circumstances—below that rate.

Every hon. Member knows that there is never a good time to increase the pay of Members of Parliament by so much as a ha'penny, regardless of the rate of inflation or the circumstances of the rest of the community. Those in the news media, who earn far more than any of us, will be loud in their condemnation; in fairness, so will many members of the general public who do not earn as much. Most people, however, rightly expect their Members of Parliament to work full time in the interests of their constituents: they expect them to do a proper job, and I believe that most expect them to receive a proper rate of pay.

I am a trade unionist, and I believe in a fair rate for the job. I do not abandon that principle solely for Members of Parliament or other public servants—especially because I am aware that many Members of Parliament on both sides of the House, myself included, are forced to subsidise their office and other costs to maintain any semblance of a fair rate of pay for their staff.

That leads me to another point—one that I always feel should be made in these debates. I believe that a fair rate for the job should be paid irrespective of a person's other circumstances. I have always believed, however, that each hon. Member—free as he is both to speak and, in particular, to vote as he chooses—also has a degree of proper responsibility to his colleagues. For that reason, I have always exercised my freedom to comment on hon. Members' pay awards with some reticence.

When I was first elected, I was a single woman without family responsibilities. Within three months, I was drawing a junior Minister's salary. That made me very conscious, when issues of Members' pay arose, that I was not facing the financial pressures faced by many of my colleagues—particularly sole earners, often with family responsibilities, and those who, unlike me, had had to establish a fresh London base. I was working in London at

[Mrs. Margaret Beckett]

the time. That has always made me very sensitive to the problems that other hon. Members in less favourable financial circumstances might be facing, and very unwilling to add my voice to the condemnation of those who think that this is a fair rate for the job.

11.44 pm

Mr. Andrew Rowe (Mid-Kent): What is the worth of a Member of Parliament is a very difficult question. The salary that we are currently proposing to alter is attached to an arbitrary percentage of the pay of a grade in the civil service which no longer exists. It is the grade that I was on 27 years ago—scarcely the progress of a greedy man.

It is difficult to determine the amount that any one of us should earn, because as the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) has said, some of us have young families, others have children who have left home, while some lucky ones have children who earn a living. It is therefore very difficult for any individual Member to comment on the pay that should be paid to others.

How should the public value us? What do they see? They see a number of supposedly grown-up people shuffling through the Lobbies not just once or twice but five or six times in succession, almost entirely careless and ignorant of the detail of what we are voting about. Among our number in the Lobby is almost every senior Minister, no matter how delicate the negotiations in which they are involved, nor how far they may have travelled that day or are about to travel across the world. Many members of the public wonder how well equipped our Ministers can possibly be to take on Jacques Delors, Gerry Adams or Saddam Hussein when they are faced with such a working schedule.

This Parliament of ours, of whose history we are so rightly proud, is dying on its feet in many respects. It is true that sometimes we have a moment of glory, or at least of undeniable idiosyncrasy, such as the interminable debates on the Maastricht treaty, which at least covered a number of the matters under debate. Those moments, however, are not typical.

We claim that we are here to control the Executive, but that claim is difficult to sustain when that Executive propose the business, guillotine the business and virtually never lose their business. We claim that we call the Executive to account. As we heard recently, the Public Accounts Committee, with its creature the auditor, does its best to track the path of some small part of public expenditure. To suggest that we here call effectively to account an Executive whose patronage extends ever further through British institutions is to delude ourselves. For half the Members in the House, the Chamber is but the antechamber to membership of the Government or the Opposition Front Bench. Of course they are very reluctant to see trimmed the powers to which they soon hope to aspire.

Much of this complaint is hardly new, but it is given a new urgency by two elements. The first is the creation of the European union and a real seepage of power from this place to Europe. Our mechanisms for monitoring the European Community are grossly inadequate. The House knows it and the public know it. The result is a further erosion of our reputation as a legislature and with it an erosion of our reputation as individual Members of Parliament.

The second new element is that, after 14 years of Conservative government, virtually every other institution in the land has been subjected to scrutiny and reform. We alone seem to be content to watch our effectiveness decline and our power relative to the Executive diminish, without making any coherent attempt to change our ways.

We live in an age when respect for individuals and institutions has almost disappeared. That may not matter very much. A. J. P. Taylor suggested that the respect with which the British people held the people who were in authority varied in inverse proportion to the prosperity of the nation. So it may not matter if we are not held in great respect, but it does matter to this United Kingdom if its legislature spends most of its time on work peripheral to the nation's needs; and if that legislature leaves but little time for those things that it does especially well.

Before we start seriously considering what we should be paid, we should ask ourselves what on earth we are doing.

11.49 pm

Mr. Alfred Morris (Manchester, Wythenshawe): I intervene briefly as chairman of the managing trustees of the parliamentary contributory pension fund to report to the House on one effect of last year's decision to freeze parliamentary pay which, regrettably, is not very widely understood.

In the pay debate on 25 November 1992, I pointed out on behalf of the managing trustees that, if a Member of Parliament were to die during the pay freeze, the effect on the incomes of her or his dependants would be lifelong if no way could be found to protect them. This is because the pensions and other benefits payable to widows, widowers and other dependants from the PCPF are based on the parliamentary salary in the deceased Member's last year of service and take no account of any subsequent increase in the salary to compensate for a period of pay freeze.

The untimely death of our much respected former colleague Judith Chaplin turned what was then a hypothetical problem into a very real and urgent one for the managing trustees of the pension fund. Unable to use that fund to help, we had to resort to the House of Commons Members' fund, to which all Members contribute, month by month, to help former colleagues and their dependants at times of urgent and special need.

Mr. John Garrett (Norwich, South): What was the problem when the fund was so over-funded that the Treasury cut its contribution?

Mr. Morris: There is no power, as the Leader of the House will confirm, available to the trustees to top up the benefits of dependants in the case of a death of a Member in service.

Mr. Garrett: Change the rules, then.

Mr. Morris: The rules are frequently altered. We have secured, as my hon. Friend will appreciate, a great many improvements in the scheme in recent years, and others are in the pipeline; but others we have sought have still to be secured.

The Members fund, although it was not introduced for that purpose, was in fact the only possible means of ensuring that a bereaved family would not be made lifelong

losers by the pay freeze. What we did, with help from the Members fund, was to base the death in service payment and other benefits on a notional salary equal to that which our late colleague would have been paid if the freeze had not been imposed. We did the same of course, in the case of the late Robert Adley's family.

This could, however, only be a temporary measure to help the bereaved families most affected by the pay freeze and, as I hope to be able to explain in tomorrow's debate on pensions, the trustees of the pension fund have been working on the additional voluntary contribution scheme of which the Lord President is aware, and on which we can comment in more detail in tomorrow's debate. Among other provisions, the new scheme will give Members the opportunity to increase their pension benefits during periods of pay restraint.

It will be seen that the trustees have been at the thick end of problems created by the suspension, last year, of the parliamentary pay formula, and I hope that it will be agreed that they have done all that was possible to protect the families of Members who have died in service since the formula was suspended. The problem will be a continuing one until the value of the pay formula agreed by the House is restored, but the AVC scheme should at least limit its seriousness.

The moral of all this is that, when the House takes decisions like that taken last November to freeze parliamentary pay, it should have regard to the effect not only on members but also on widows and other dependants. For them, the consequences might not simply be of passing concern, but financially very hurtful, keenly resented and lifelong.

11.54 pm

Mr. Peter Bottomley (Eltham): We have heard three really good speeches and I add to that the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Kent (Mr. Rowe).

The right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett), the deputy leader of the Labour party, spoke briefly and with a great deal of common sense. Her speech will have been appreciated by hon. Members on both sides of the House.

My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House spelt out the current position, which is generally well understood by the media. That is one reason why we were not subject to the attacks we have suffered in previous years.

Let me give my view of what we ought to be doing. The House should set a level of pay in one Parliament to come into effect at the beginning of the next Parliament and, once set at an appropriate level, it should be left unchanged from one general election to another.

The level of pay is debatable. My personal view, which is not a matter for debate, as there is not an amendment or a motion to that effect tonight, is that it ought to be set at roughly the same level as a general practitioner in medicine. I am not arguing for it now, but giving my view on what it should be.

I do not believe that the present level of pay is appropriate for those who are waiting to become Ministers in a future Government—for example those Labour Members who have waited 14 years, and who may have to wait another 14 years. It is always awkward to have increases during a Parliament, and to settle the pay increase just after a general election, as used to be the case, causes difficulty to many people.

In the interim, it is better that the Government's motions should be approved, but I shall vote for amendment (a) if it is moved, as I do not believe that, just because a level of pay is set, it is compulsory for Members to take it. The situations and circumstances of Members of Parliament vary enormously—mine have. In the years when I was the only Member of Parliament in my family, my circumstances were different from what they are now. It is not easy to say what other people should be putting up with.

What happens between elections is normally a consequence of inflation rather than a general readjustment of the level of pay. That is the argument against regular increases during a Parliament. If the electorate and those who select candidates believe Members of Parliament not worth the general level of pay, in effect they are saying that only the very rich or the very poor should afford to become Members of Parliament.

Most of our constituents like to be represented by people in the middle-income groups, and people with middling levels of achievement or some concern for the welfare of those around them, as well as for their own material well-being, should be able to become Members of Parliament.

It is not the most important issue to our electors or to us, but it is worth resolving. The Government were right to put these general motions to the House.

11.57 pm

Mr. Frank Field (Birkenhead): I beg to move amendment (a), in subsection (1)(a) leave out '£31,687' and insert '£30,854'.

My right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) mentioned the weakness of my position, and I wish to begin there. She was right to point out that some Members of Parliament have many more responsibilities than others and, therefore, it is less appropriate for those with fewest positions to speak to my amendment.

Given that I am mindful of the feelings of right hon. and hon. Members, particularly those with greater responsibilities than mine, I am grateful for the chance to explain why I tabled the amendment.

I should much prefer to address the House from a position of strength rather than one of weakness, but my position is bound up with an argument. At any one time, the number of people in work is linked to the size of the wage packets taken by those in work. Therefore, there is a link between the size of pay packets and unemployment.

Let us consider what may be the situation in the public sector next year, if the Government say that there should be a pay freeze. In any one year, about 500,000 people who work in the public sector die, retire or leave their jobs for other reasons. The question that workers in the public sector will face is whether we fill those positions from among those who do not now have jobs, or do not fill them, but instead share among ourselves the wage packets that would have gone to people who are unemployed. The Government will be able to maintain that there is a pay freeze, but that we can have a pay increase of 5 per cent. That will be a crucial issue for the public sector next year, and I wish to participate in the discussion. It will be difficult to participate if we have not applied the same lesson to ourselves.

[Mr. Frank Field]

All of us—not only Labour Members—now represent constituencies scarred by unemployment. I should like to be able to tell the House that I am now hardened to those men—I say "men" without shame, because, over the past 15 years, there has been an increase in jobs for women and a collapse in the number of decently paid jobs for men—who come to my surgery, laugh, and say that they are now impervious to the fact that they will not get a job, so they are working the system. But while their mouths smile, their wintry eyes tell another tale.

I should like to be able to tell the House that I am hardened to that, but I am definitely not hardened to the situation when male constituents come into my surgery and simply cry as they tell me how life has been shattered, and they believe that it will not be put together again, because all that the future holds for them is unemployment.

Rightly, we are debating the prospect of increasing our pay. If we do that, the wage bill increases by £1 million in any one year. That £1 million could be spent differently; it need not go to us. I do not in any way say that Members of Parliament do not deserve the money or should not have it, but I want to register the fact that at any one time there is a link between the level of pay awards and the number of people in employment. [HON. MEMBERS: "Prove it."] I have been trying to prove that case with my argument about the public sector. [HON. MEMBERS: "You have not done it very well."] Perhaps, as my hon. Friends are saying, I have failed to present a powerful enough logical case to convince hon. Members or to marshal my argument with enough eloquence to convince them.

None the less, I believe that, if we are to hold out any hope to our constituents, we all have to face the question: are we prepared to share our rewards with those who are unemployed? There may be less painful ways of moving back towards full employment, but, if there are, we have not heard of them. This is one, but only one, method that is practical and could be implemented.

We are debating our pay and our rightful rewards, but we could give the debate about unemployment a total change of gear. We could call a halt to the phoney war that has raged over unemployment for the past 20 years, and give the debate a change of direction the like of which has not been seen for a long time.

12.3 am

Miss Emma Nicholson (Torridge and Devon, West): We are all embarrassed at having to discuss our own pay. It is an especially unpleasant thing to have to do, and I ask the House to have the kindness to listen for a moment or two while I explore why such a debate is so embarrassing, and whether there is any other way in which the pay of Members of Parliament could be determined. I was forced to think about the subject at lunchtime today, because "The World at One" telephoned me and said that the programme had to have a Member of Parliament to balance a health care worker in a discussion on the increase in Members' pay.

I wanted to vote against the motion, but I felt it my duty to vote in favour, for a variety of perhaps unquantified reasons. Because I had to speak on "The World at One", I had to think through my position, and I found myself justifying the motion as effectively as I could.

There is a natural suspicion among us all of those who set their own rate of pay. It is an odd piece of authority to have. It is quite rare in our society, but we do have that authority. Other people who have the capacity to set their own rates of pay, such as directors of public companies, are subject to fierce and proper criticism from us as well as from the public, and at least they are responsive to shareholders.

Although we are technically accountable to the electorate, in this matter we are so far away from electoral accountability that there is no link at all. No ballot box is based on the way we vote on Members' pay: it is based on a bundle of many things. Directors are accountable to shareholders at an annual general meeting, and their rates of pay can be formally criticised.

Despite the fact that hon. Members find this debate embarrassing and always have done—that is shown by the shortness of the speeches, if no other indicator exists—we continue to vote ourselves pay rises, so we presumably feel that we deserve them. I want to deal with the reasons for that view.

I have a high regard, both personally and professionally, for the deputy Leader of the Opposition. However, I argue strongly against her reason—it is a commonly held perception—for justifying our pay rises, which is that some people have larger family responsibilities than others. Without meaning to be personally critical, I must say that that is an outdated and irrelevant argument. In what other line of work in the modern world would we allow rates of pay to be determined by family responsibilities? The rate should be determined by the value of the person performing the job—in other words, market forces.

It is extraordinary that, in the modern world, we should be discussing rates of pay and justifying them for any job in the United Kingdom on the basis of family responsibilities, friendships or who has particular income levels external to their rates of pay. Are we not able to look at the job we do and assess whether it is worth a particular rate of pay?

Mrs. Beckett: I do not wish to detain the hon. Lady, but I want to make it clear that I am not suggesting that people's rates of pay should be set by their family circumstances. I am suggesting that those of us who are under less financial pressure than others should perhaps have regard to that fact in our criticisms of whether a pay rise should be awarded.

Miss Nicholson: With respect, that is merely the same argument turned round and addressed another way. Those of us who are or have been employers outside the House of Commons know that it would be nonsense to look at a group of employees and say that one must be more sensitive to a particular person's pay rise because of their background or family responsibilities. It is an inappropriate way in which to determine the rate of pay.

Mrs. Maria Fyfe (Glasgow, Maryhill): Will the hon. Lady give way?

Miss Nicholson: No.

Another much stronger point was suggested, perhaps also by the hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett)—that there is an over-large, if I may make a judgment in using that word, financial burden on Members of Parliament whose constituency pressures are exceptionally large for a variety of reasons. They may find that they have

to disburse part of their salary to fulfil their obligations. In those circumstances there is a corollary with the business world. In what other line of work has any of us been involved where, if one generates more productive work, one is not given more resources with which to fulfil one's commitments to the job? That is a compelling argument.

Where Members of Parliament fall down is that, in assessing the job, we do not take on board the necessity of examining the different ways in which we perform. We happily gloss over that. We have a rate of pay for our work irrespective of the way in which we perform. It is not an impossible conundrum. I believe that there might be ways in which our over-long hours, the distances that we travel and particular responsibilities pertaining to the job could be taken into account. Some Members have been here longer than many others. Surely there should be some way of rewarding them for their years of service. There are many determinants and indicators which are well used in other sectors of pay review.

It ought to be possible for us to remove this interminable debate from the House of Commons. I strongly believe that my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House should seriously consider the appointment of a permanent pay review body which would ensure that we never have to go through this misery again.

We are fortunate in having an honest House of Commons. Despite all our difficulties and pressures and despite the complexities, we are proud to have a House of Commons which is completely honourable and where there is no cheating of any sort. Could we not take the further step of giving away the responsibility for determining our own pay, as other Parliaments do? We should have an external body and cut out these debates once and for all.

12.10 am

Mr. Doug Hoyle (Warrington, North): I shall not follow the argument advanced by the hon. Member for Torridge and Devon, West (Miss Nicholson). I find it strange that she believes that those in industry who award themselves large sums are accountable to shareholders. The suggestion was greeted with some hilarity on the Opposition Benches. I prefer to return to the practical side of the issue and to what the Leader of the House said.

When we discussed our pay last year, the Leader of the House promised us that he would try to ensure that the link with the civil service was not broken. I am pleased that he has returned this year to give us a notional link. Like my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett), I believe that we must wait to see how it turns out in practice.

When I spoke in the debate last year, I said that we would not get any plaudits for not taking the 3·9 per cent. increase which was awarded in August 1992 and should have been paid to us in January this year. Indeed, we received no recognition for instituting the pay freeze. The press has condemned us. *The Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Express*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Sunday Mirror* brought out all the usual arguments about greedy Members of Parliament. None of them took into account the fact that we had had a pay freeze for the past 12 months. When we catch up, we shall be £2,000 out of pocket. If we cut our pay tonight, the press would say that we had obviously been overpaid. We would never win the argument.

We do not need lessons from editors who are on six-figure salaries. If they want to set an example, they should cut their own pay first and then talk to the rest of us about ours. In January next year, we will not even catch up to the 3·9 per cent. We will receive only 2·7 per cent. It will be two years before we catch up.

I found the argument of my hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) rather unusual. He said that, if we all took a little less, we could find employment for more. If that were true, with the low wages that are paid in Calcutta, there would be no unemployment there. It is not true that taking a cut in wages generates employment for someone else. Of course no one is forced to take any increase that is awarded. It is up to each Member to make up his or her mind. If hon. Members take the increase, they can give it to a good cause or help other people.

If hon. Members take the increase, they can give it to a good cause or help other people.

There are two classes of hon. Members in this place. There are those who depend on their salaries and those who are not totally dependent on them. I am rather sorry that the hon. Member for Bristol, North-West (Mr. Stern), who also signed the amendment in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field), is not in the Chamber. The hon. Member for Bristol, North-West is not totally dependent on his House of Commons salary. He has consultancies, one of which involves accountancy. I wonder whether he will be giving those up. It is far easier to lecture the House when one is not totally dependent on the salary that one takes from this place.

Mr. Corbyn: Is my hon. Friend surprised by the absence of the hon. Member for Bristol, North-West (Mr. Stern)?

Mr. Hoyle: I admit that we do not expect the hon. Member for Bristol, North-West to be here all the time. He is a busy man, ensuring that he is not totally dependent on the salary that he receives from this place.

If we accept the proposals, we will not have to return to this House year after year in respect of this matter. I congratulate the Leader of the House on making that possible. I hope that this is the last occasion in this Parliament that we have to debate the issue. I respect people who come along and say things to us. However, I will not be lectured by the barons of the press.

12.15 am

Sir Terence Higgins (Worthing): The House always approaches the question of Members' pay with considerable diffidence. None of us would dispute the fact that there is a real presentational problem. We should be grateful to my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House and to the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) for setting out the real position so clearly.

There is no doubt that, at the end of last week, the coverage in the media, on the radio and television, was very distorted. Numerous reports stated that we were about to award ourselves pay increases of more than thrice the level of inflation, or certainly more than the level of inflation. There were varying reports, but that was their general tenor. My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House has made it absolutely clear that that is not the case. It is very important to get that point across.

My right hon. Friend made it clear that, if we consider the period from the end of 1992 to 1995, the proposal will

[Sir Terence Higgins]

mean that we have exercised greater restraint on our pay than is the case with regard to the civil service. In the broad context of pay restraint, that is very important.

While the speech of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) was heartfelt, and the repercussions on pay policy generally may have some of the implications to which he referred, we can reasonably claim that we sought to set an example. In the light of our experience last year, it would be optimistic to suppose, as the hon. Member for Warrington, North (Mr. Hoyle) suggested, that this will have much effect. However, we have tried in this case.

I want to detain the House for a moment to consider a longer-term perspective. There is an excellent research paper in the Library. I have been an hon. Member for almost 30 years and I noted with some interest that the level of pay set just after I became a Member, in real terms, was higher than the present proposals. We have still not reached the level of our pay in the early 1960s.

After a little more research, I discovered that average earnings over that period have increased nineteenfold in cost terms and by 90 per cent. in real terms. While our level has remained exactly the same, in a broad sense the standard of living of the population as a whole has increased by 90 per cent. To a considerable extent, that shows the way in which successive debates on hon. Members' pay have affected our relative position.

We have made two attempts to take the matter out of the political arena and have some impartial assessment of it. The first involved the Top Salaries Review Body, or whatever it is called now. Over the years, that body has made several recommendations. The graph in the Library shows what the position was. In 1975, a recommendation was made and rejected. In 1979, a recommendation was made and rejected or, more accurately, we got half of it one year, a quarter the following year and a further quarter the year after that. The review body made recommendations in 1983, and they were rejected. It would be optimistic to suppose that that forms an effective way to deal with the problem outside the political arena.

We have also tried to link our salaries with those of the civil service. The first attempt to do that was as long ago as 1975. A vote in the House, by a majority, agreed that we should be linked to the level of deputy secretary, but after the election it was not implemented. I am not sure what level of salary a deputy secretary is now paid, but it is something like £60,000. In 1983, we ended up with the rather bizarre idea of having 89 per cent. of the salary of someone at grade 6. The reason for that is lost in the mists of time, but I think that it was part of a compromise by Sir Edward du Cann. That may explain why.

In 1987, we said that we would have a permanent linkage with the civil service, and, having voted for that on three separate occasions, we thought that we would get that, until the 1992 autumn statement, when there was a freeze, and the permanent link was broken. As a result, we are in our present dilemma, and we shall again have to catch up over a period of some years, before we get back to where we should have been in January 1992. I fear that the link is not a satisfactory arrangement. As the hon. Member for Warrington, North suggested, it is worth considering to what extent the freeze we had last year had any effect.

My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House promised last year that he would ensure that there was not a permanent reduction in the level of Members' pay, with us being left further and further behind. The reality is that while he said that we would not be permanently disadvantaged, the time lag has, as he pointed out, meant that we are permanently disadvantaged, at any rate to the extent of £2,000. That has gone for ever. It is right that we should get back to the linkage.

What my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House is proposing is in line with the Government's policy that we should encourage pay restraint. As the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) has said, that is important. That being so, it is entirely reasonable, if the matter is looked at impartially and objectively, that we should support the Leader of the House, and those on the Opposition Front Bench, on what has been put before us this evening.

12.22 am

Mr. James Wallace (Orkney and Shetland): The right hon. Member for Worthing (Sir T. Higgins) has done us a service in setting the debate in a historical context, and reminding us of what the Leader of the House said—that the increase that we shall get if the motion is approved will be, on 1 January 1994, a 2·7 per cent. increase when inflation, unless there is a miracle in the next two months, will have gone up by 4·6 per cent. As we have been reminded, as a result of having our pay frozen over the past year, we shall have lost £2,000 by the time we eventually reach the promised parity. It is important to set the context properly.

I can say on behalf of my right hon. and hon. Friends, as the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) said on behalf of the Labour party, that there will be no party line, and each of my colleagues will make up his or her mind according to how he or she sees fit. I shall support the motion. We should acknowledge that the undertakings that the Leader of the House gave last year, when he moved the motion setting up the freeze, he has earnestly sought to honour. It is a great credit to him that he has fought for that, and succeeded. There is no question of dishonour for those who support the motion, who debated the freeze last year on the basis that we would return to parity, and who wish to carry that through and vote accordingly.

One of the most significant comments so far was made by the hon. Member for Mid-Kent (Mr. Rowe), who said that 27 years ago he received the grade 6 civil service pay —of which, until very recently, we were going to award ourselves 89 per cent. That shows that many right hon. and hon. Members do not come here only for the money. I do not complain about that. We have made a choice; we know what we are letting ourselves in for. Equally, it is not unreasonable that we should have a fair rate for the job and that we should be reasonably remunerated.

Certainly we are not so well remunerated as many legislatures in the European Community or the United States. Indeed, some statistics which my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire (Mr. Kirkwood) had the Library compile before last year's debate showed that

"adult males in April 1992 above the £590 paid to MPs were: general managers and administrators in national and local government . . . marketing and sales managers . . . medical practitioners . . . solicitors . . . ship and aircraft officers, air traffic planners . . . underwriters . . . brokers, and investment analysts".

One could go on. We are not seeking the earth. It is not unreasonable to seek reasonable remuneration.

We broke the link, no doubt for a good reason. Let us be fair: we did it as a gesture. Having broken that link, we have to go through the agony of again having to vote ourselves a pay rise. I hope that, by restoring a link, we can actually have the guts to stick to it. It is questionable what effect that gesture had, even if we were to vote for another pay freeze tonight. The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) suggested that it would save £1 million. My calculation is that at 650 times—it is not actually 650, because the proposed increase for salaried Members is less than the proposed increase for ordinary Members—it would be only about £520,000, a good part of which would return to the Treasury in tax.

I do not believe for one moment that that will affect the economic direction of the country, no matter how difficult the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Chief Secretary have found things in the past few months. Therefore, we should support the motion and acknowledge that the Leader of the House has honoured his undertaking and that it is quite consistent, having voted for a freeze last year, to follow it through and support the motion.

12.26 am

Sir Jim Spicer (Dorset, West): I thank my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House for the way in which he introduced this matter, in particular the way in which he reminded us of the pledge given to the House last year. It was on the basis of that pledge that a large number of right hon. and hon. Members accepted the need for the freeze and voted for it. I also thank the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett), the deputy Leader of the Opposition, for the remarkable way in which, in a few minutes, she encapsulated the views of many right hon. and hon. Members.

I have the honour to serve under the right hon. Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris) as one of the trustees of the pension group. When the freeze was initiated, I spoke about pensions and the effect of that freeze on pensioners. Nobody should forget that that will not go away; it will remain with us for some time to come. Even when we catch up, we will still be that much behind. The effect on pensions will be not for one or two years but for 20 or 25 years for some widows or widowers.

We know that, whatever we do or say tonight, we will never get it right in the eyes of the general public. I have already received lovely letters saying, "I don't think that you should increase your pay; you shouldn't freeze it; you shouldn't have any bloody pay at all because you are all absolutely useless." We will receive those letters——

Mr. Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield): I have not received one.

Sir Jim Spicer: My hon. Friend need not worry; he will.

I appeal to some hon. Members who might be inclined to say, "Okay, I am going to abstain. I know that the measure will go through tomorrow and I will be able to bravely say to my constituents or on the radio, 'I did not vote for this increase'." If they follow that course, in all honesty they should write to the Fees Office refusing the increase.

Alternatively, those who feel impelled to vote against what my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House has proposed tonight could make a contribution to charity through the give-as-you-earn scheme. I did a little investigation this morning, and I was shocked to find that only about 55 Members currently do so. I hope that most hon. Members will follow the lead that has been given by the Leader of the House and the deputy Leader of the Opposition, vote in favour of this and accept the inevitable result of the public saying, "There they go again."

I am thinking not of my time in the House, but of what will happen in the years ahead. I want to get away from those awful first 16 years that I spent in the House when, year after year, we went through this awful ritual, and, whatever we did, we never found favour in the eyes of the general public.

12.30 am

Ms Rachel Squire (Dunfermline, West): What the hon. Member for Dorset, West (Sir J. Spicer) said about pensions could be even more of a reason why this debate should be about public service pay generally, not just the pay of Members of Parliament.

I have three points to make about the pay of Members of Parliament and public service workers. First, we are public servants. We are here to serve our constituents and to argue for the policies that we believe will be of benefit to them. There are 5 million other public service workers and they feel considerably aggrieved by the Government's treatment of them. They were given an undertaking last year that the 1·5 per cent. pay limit would not be repeated, yet it is being repeated.

I agree with many of the comments made by hon. Members about the embarrassment of debating our pay, particularly given some of the antics that take place in this Chamber, a good example of which occurred tonight. It is hardly any wonder that members of the public sometimes call into question their general opinion of politicians.

I accept what has been said about the media's responsibility for part of the impression of politicians, and I make it clear that many of us do not accept fat consultancy fees, but spend our entire office allowance on employing people and providing a service to our constituents. However, as we are well aware, the long hours and commitments of many hon. Members are often not reported.

My next point relates to the low pay of many public service workers, despite their hard work and commitment. More than half a million of them earn less than £174 per week. The 1·5 per cent. pay increase for, say, a nursing auxiliary, will amount to an increase of only about £2 a week before tax, and many of us have spent more than that tonight simply on one meal.

The increase in national insurance contributions, higher prices in general and VAT on fuel mean that many public service workers have had a pay cut.

My final point relates to talk about performance-related pay. The Government are saying that, for other public service workers, but not for us, there will be no pay increase in 1994-95 unless there is performance-related pay. I shall finish by suggesting that, if any people should base their salaries on performance-related pay, it should be Ministers. I predict that, if the salary of Ministers were related to the public view of their performance on economic policy, they would soon be arguing for a minimum wage to be introduced.

12.36 am

Mr. Quentin Davies (Stamford and Spalding): Clearly, one can make a case for continuing our pay freeze in a fashion which seems, at least at first sight, morally very attractive. The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) did that with his usual ability and lucidity. One can make a case for continuing a pay freeze in a more demagogic or populist fashion, and the media seem to be good at doing that.

I shall vote for the motions with no hesitation or embarrassment at all. If we do not support the restoration of the link with civil service pay, we shall be doing something that is profoundly irresponsible, and for a simple reason. If we continue with a pay freeze, only one of two things logically can happen. Either each year we will continue to face a real decline in the value of our pay. That means that, if inflation continues at any rate, ultimately, logically and with mathematical certainty, eventually the real level of our pay will be virtually worthless. If that happens, we will have returned to the practice of the 18th and 19th centuries when people could come to this House only if they had substantial private means or, much more sinisterly, if they had a powerful patron or interest group prepared to pay to send them here. I do not think that any hon. Members seriously want that.

Otherwise, if we do not restore the link with civil service pay, the only logical alternative is that the gap between civil service pay and our own will steadily expand and we will simply have postponed dealing with a difficult problem, making it much more difficult to deal with it subsequently when we must do so. Surely that cannot be good politics, and it cannot be a responsible decision of the House.

Mrs. Fyfe *rose——*

Mr. Davies: I hope that the hon. Lady will forgive me —I have very little time and I want to be uncharacteristically brief.

There is no doubt whatever that the gesture we made at the beginning of 1992 to accept a pay freeze went completely unappreciated. Certainly I never heard a single word from anyone in my constituency or elsewhere saying that he thought that it was a good idea or a noble thing to do, and certainly no one suggested that it would affect his or her pay bargaining or wage setting behaviour. Indeed, I do not believe that anyone took seriously that suggestion at that time, or at any other time.

We should not be misled into empty gestures. And certainly, we should not be influenced by demagogy, populism, or what is written in the media. It would be a form of moral corruption to allow our judgment in this or any other matter to be subject to intimidation by the press or anyone else outside the House. We should do what we believe is right in all the circumstances, and I believe that that means that we should support the Leader of the House this evening.

12.39 am

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): I am sorry that the two amendments in my name and those of my hon. Friends have not been selected for a Division.

In reality, there are two classes of Members in this House. There are those who depend entirely on their parliamentary salary for their livelihood and those who, when elected, obtain parliamentary adviserships and company directorships—*[Interruption.]*—are paid by lobby organisations and, sometimes, by the media. *[Interruption.]* Some of them are squealing now, because I am raising this in Parliament and they do not like it.

Many Members receive much more than their parliamentary salary from outside interests. Some Members directly prejudice their own position in the House because of their allegiance to their paymasters. It is entirely wrong to have two classes of Members and only one level of payment. My amendment would allow——

Mr. Quentin Davies: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Cryer: I do not have much time. The hon. Gentleman has already spoken, and I have only a few minutes left.

My amendment would allow Members who depend on this place for a livelihood to receive the increase, but not those who receive more than £2,000 a year from outside interests. That would allow some flexibility for the odd television appearance and the odd article. It could not be argued, for example, that a £10 payment for a television interview would prevent a Member from having the increase. It would allow Members who operate in a reasonable framework and Members who are determined to work full time in Parliament to do so. It would exclude from this place the corruption caused by outside interests.

Mr. Graham Riddick (Colne Valley): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Cryer: I am not giving way. The hon. Gentleman is wasting his time standing up.

Sometimes it is argued that it is necessary to have Members with outside interests to bring experience to this House. Those who argue in that way are always those with a highly paid directorship, on £10,000 a year from parliamentary lobbyists and so on. They never spend time down some of the few remaining coal mines or in poorly paid manual occupations. Those with between two and eight outside jobs here simply exhibit the symptoms of greed.

Members who resent any criticism about our judgment and our salaries should bear in mind the fact that the Government set the level of payment for the poorest people. They set the levels for child support and income support. Members are in receipt of salaries that are greater than those of most constituents. The Government set the level of income at low rates because, when they get into an economic mess, they always hit the poor to get themselves out of it. It is not surprising, then, that, when salaries are discussed, they invite some criticism.

My second amendment relates to public sector workers.

Mrs. Fyfe: Does my hon. Friend agree that, since the House wishes, rightly, to assert the rate for our job tonight, it should at an early stage consider the rate for the job of elected members of local councils, who are disgracefully underpaid and have been for many years?

Mr. Cryer: That could reasonably be taken into account. My hon. Friend is right: there are double standards. The standards imposed by this Government and this House on local councillors for revealing their financial interests—it is a criminal penalty for any councillor to vote

on anything in which they have a financial interest—are not imposed in this House. My hon. Friend the Member for Maryhill (Mrs. Fyfe) was right to draw attention to that.

My second amendment, which I regret has not been selected, relates to other public sector workers, on whom the Government have imposed a 1·5 per cent. limit on pay increases. My amendment simply says that any increase given to Members of Parliament should automatically apply to other public sector workers. Why should not the police, nurses, firemen and other public sector workers receive the same percentage increase that we are to get? That would make sense and would only be fair. It would show that we value nurses, for example, as highly as Members of Parliament.

As my amendments have not been selected, I shall not support the motion. I shall support the amendments tabled by my hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field), which I hope he will move to demonstrate that all is not well in this Parliament. Until the question of outside jobs is sorted out and Members of Parliament become full-time, because they are paid enough to be full-time, a big question mark will remain over pay in this House.

12.45 am

Mr. Patrick Nicholls (Teignbridge): For an ex-Euro Member of Parliament to make such a speech brings unctuousness to a new achievement—*[Interruption.]* That is an unparliamentary expression, so I cannot pick it up. On the basis of what we have heard from the hon. Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer) tonight, he was overpaid then and he is overpaid now.

I shall certainly support my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House. He made a powerful case in support of the motion before the House, and I understand any Member taking that view as well. The idea that we are somehow awarding ourselves more than the public sector is false, and my right hon. Friend set out dramatically the reasoning for that.

I was also highly impressed by the speech made by the hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett). She set a theme for the debate which, with one possible exception, has been followed through: that it is unseemly—to be fair, it has not happened tonight—to have one Member lecturing another on what pay rise he is entitled to take. By any reasonable approach, the proposal is reasonable. But the hon. Lady was fair enough to say that different demands fall on different Members because of their different circumstances.

With respect to my hon. Friend the Member for Torridge and Devon, West (Miss Nicholson), we should not say that we should be paid because of the various responsibilities that we have taken on. That is not the point. For the current year, I shall ask the Fees Office to give me a 1·5 per cent. rise. The fact that I can do that must be influenced by the fact that I have private means. I should like to think that, if I did not, I would still reach that decision. I probably would but, in all conscience, I cannot put out of my mind the fact that I can afford to do it. I suppose that those of us with wealthy spouses also try to put it out of their minds and are not influenced by that. But they might be.

My position is somewhat ironic. Perhaps we made a mistake last year in freezing our pay. As the hon. Member for Warrington, North (Mr. Hoyle) fairly said, our doing so got no plaudits out there in the marketplace. Ironically, had we taken a 1·5 per cent. rise last year and a 1·5 per cent. rise this year, we would have done slightly better, and it would also have been justified.

Although it may not have done much good out there, in a sense I found it useful. When people came to my surgery banging my desk—sometimes literally—saying, "I am doing a very worthwhile job in the public sector, so I should be paid more," I could say, "I know. You are doing a thoroughly worthwhile job, but I can't take that into account. I take into account what the nation thinks it can afford for your duties." That underpins the motion which my right hon. Friend has brought to the House tonight.

No member of Parliament does not know, in his heart of hearts, that the overwhelming majority of us on both sides of the House put our backs into this job and, compared with the salary that we could command in the marketplace, we are paid considerably less. But a judgment must be made about what we can afford.

I am sure that this motion is right, and I well understand the action of any hon. Member who votes in favour of it. Moreover, I see nothing inconsistent in saying that we must all be answerable for ourselves: many different influences are brought to bear on us. I personally have decided to accept an increase of 1·5 per cent., for the current year at least; but that is an entirely personal judgment, which I do not urge on anyone else.

12.49 am

Dr. Tony Wright (Cannock and Burntwood): Tonight's speeches—with the exception of one or two by Opposition Members—have been self-congratulatory. I want, just for a moment, to strike a rather more discordant note.

I take my cue from the hon. Member for Mid-Kent (Mr. Rowe), who said that for 14 years Parliament has not asserted itself against the Executive. I found myself agreeing with him. On only eight occasions since 1979 have the Government been defeated on the Floor of the House; it was seven before the recent Maastricht hiccup. On no fewer than three of those occasions, the issue has been Members' pay and allowances.

I ask the House to reflect on what the public will make of that. What conclusion will they reach about the ability of this Parliament to be a Parliament—to hold the Executive to account, and to take the action that our constituents expect us to take when they write to us? We should think seriously about the fact that we do not do those things, and about the fact that we can engineer this consensus tonight. When we are discussing other matters, we march through the Lobbies in the way decreed by the Whips and the executive.

That is one of my two reservations about the motion. The other is this. When I first became a Member of Parliament, I was told that I should buy a Ford Sierra with diesel. When I asked why, I was told, "It is the Member of Parliament's car. You get an allowance of 68·2p a mile if you drive a motor car with an engine capacity of more than 2300 cc." That is outrageous: it rewards vice, not virtue. *[Interruption.]* It rewards environmental vice. It encourages exactly the kind of behaviour that we should be discouraging.

When I first became a Member of Parliament, I went to a meeting at which there was a great movement to reform allowances. Someone made a proposal that prompted someone else to say, "Ah, but if we do that they will want

[Dr. Tony Wright]

to do a proper audit on us." No proper audit is done on us: no proper audit is carried out on what Members of Parliament do, or on how they spend their allowances.

My first conclusion is that there ought to be such an audit; my second—this is another attempt to agree with the hon. Member for Mid-Kent—is that, if we want to carry our constituents and the country with us on issues such as this, we must become a different kind of Parliament from the Parliament that we are now. At present, we are an unreformed Parliament. There is a whole reform agenda out there, and, if we are serious about holding Governments to account and representing our constituents, we need to act on it.

It being one and a half hours after the commencement of proceedings on the motion, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *put the Question already proposed from the Chair, pursuant to Order [29 October],* That the amendment by made:—

The House divided: Ayes 38, Noes 279.

Division No. 400] **[12.54 am**

AYES

Alexander, Richard
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Alton, David
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Cryer, Bob
Dowd, Jim
Elletson, Harold
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Gallie, Phil
Gill, Christopher
Gordon, Mildred
Harvey, Nick
Hawkins, Nick
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Kilfedder, Sir James
McCrea, Rev William
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Pickthall, Colin
Pope, Greg
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Rooker, Jeff
Skinner, Dennis
Spring, Richard
Stevenson, George
Trotter, Neville
Walden, George
Walley, Joan
Ward, John
Wareing, Robert N

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Harry Barnes and
Ms Liz Lynne.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allen, Graham
Amess, David
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Ashton, Joe
Atkins, Robert
Austin-Walker, John
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Bell, Stuart
Bellingham, Henry
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Carrington, Matthew
Chapman, Sydney
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Ruclif)*
Clelland, David
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evennett, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Faulds, Andrew
Flynn, Paul
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
Fyfe, Maria
Gale, Roger
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Golding, Mrs Llin
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Graham, Thomas
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Gunnell, John
Hague, William
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Harris, David
Hayes, Jerry
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Heppell, John
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Illsley, Eric
Jack, Michael
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Key, Robert
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lewis, Terry
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLeish, Henry
McLoughlin, Patrick
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mandelson, Peter
Mans, Keith
Marek, Dr John
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Maxton, John
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Meale, Alan
Merchant, Piers
Michael, Alun
Milligan, Stephen
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Morgan, Rhodri
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Moss, Malcolm
Mudie, George
Murphy, Paul
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
O'Neill, Martin
Oppenheim, Phillip
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Ottaway, Richard
Paice, James
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickles, Eric
Pike, Peter L.
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Randall, Stuart
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Rendel, David
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn

Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Short, Clare
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spellar, John
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Steen, Anthony
Stewart, Allan
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Turner, Dennis
Twinn, Dr Ian
Tyler, Paul
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Wallace, James
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Watson, Mike
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Widdecombe, Ann
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wilson, Brian
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'fld)*
Wise, Audrey
Wolfson, Mark
Wray, Jimmy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Timothy Wood.

Question accordingly negatived.
Main Question put:—
The House divided: Ayes 268, Noes 42.

Division No. 401] **[1.07 am**

AYES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allen, Graham
Amess, David
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Atkins, Robert
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Bell, Stuart
Bellingham, Henry
Bennett, Andrew F.
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Carrington, Matthew
Chapman, Sydney
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Ruclif)*
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cox, Tom
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Devlin, Tim
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evennett, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Flynn, Paul
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
Gale, Roger
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
Gerrard, Neil
Golding, Mrs Llin
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Graham, Thomas
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Gunnell, John
Hague, William
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Harris, David
Hayes, Jerry
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Illsley, Eric
Jack, Michael
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Key, Robert
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lewis, Terry
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLeish, Henry
McLoughlin, Patrick
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mandelson, Peter
Mans, Keith
Marek, Dr John
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Maxton, John
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Meale, Alan
Merchant, Piers
Michael, Alun
Milligan, Stephen
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Moss, Malcolm
Mudie, George
Murphy, Paul
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
O'Neill, Martin
Oppenheim, Phillip
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Ottaway, Richard
Paice, James
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickles, Eric
Pike, Peter L.
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Purchase, Ken
Randall, Stuart
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Rendel, David
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Short, Clare
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spellar, John
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Steen, Anthony
Stewart, Allan
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Streeter, Gary

Sweeney, Walter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Twinn, Dr Ian
Tyler, Paul
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Wallace, James
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Watson, Mike
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Widdecombe, Ann
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'fld)*
Wise, Audrey
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Alexander, Richard
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Alton, David
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Aspinwall, Jack
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Bates, Michael
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Benton, Joe
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clelland, David
Corbyn, Jeremy
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Dowd, Jim
Elletson, Harold
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Gallie, Phil
Gill, Christopher
Gordon, Mildred
Harvey, Nick
Hawkins, Nick
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfedder, Sir James
Lidington, David
Lynne, Ms Liz
McCrea, Rev William
Marland, Paul
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Paisley, Rev Ian
Pickthall, Colin
Pope, Greg
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Skinner, Dennis
Spink, Dr Robert
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Stephen, Michael
Sykes, John
Wareing, Robert N

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Harry Barnes and
Mr. Bob Cryer.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Queen's Recommendation having been signified—

Motion made, and Question put forthwith, pursuant to Order [29th October],

That the following provision should be made with respect to the salaries of Members of this House—

(1) In respect of service in 1994—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate of £31,687; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate of £23,854.

(2) In respect of service in 1995—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the sum of £32,538 but increased by the relevant percentage for that year; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the sum of £24,495 but increased by the relevant percentage for that year.

(3) In respect of service in any subsequent year—
  (a) the salary of an ordinary Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the salary of an ordinary Member for the preceding year but increased by the relevant percentage for that subsequent year; and
  (b) the salary of a salaried Member shall be at a yearly rate equal to the salary of a salaried Member for the preceding year but increased by the relevant percentage for that subsequent year.

(4) For the purposes of this Resolution—
  (a) an ordinary Member is a Member of this House other than a salaried Member;
  (b) a salaried Member is an Officer of this House or any Member of this House receiving a salary under the Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975 or a pension under section 26 of the Parliamentary and other Pensions Act 1972; and
  (c) the relevant percentage for any year ("the relevant year") is the percentage by which, as a result of any pay settlement in the preceding year and any stage taking effect in that year of an earlier pay settlement, the average annual salary (disregarding allowances) on 1st January in the relevant year of the persons covered by the 1992 Pay Agreement for Grades 5 to 7 has increased compared with that average on 1st January in the preceding year.—*[Mr. Newton.]*

Question agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith, pursuant to Order [29th October],

That the draft Ministerial and other Salaries Order 1993, which was laid before this House on 1st November, be approved. —*[Mr. Newton.]*

Question agreed to.

Business of the House

1.19 am

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): With permission, I should like to make a short business statement. The business for tomorrow will now be:

Motions on Members' pensions

Motions relating to statutory instruments on sports grounds and sporting events

Motions on parliamentary Questions

Proceedings on the following consolidation Bills:

The Crofters (Scotland) Bill *[Lords]*, the Scottish Land Court Bill *[Lords]*, the Health Service Commissioners Bill *[Lords]*, the Probation Service Bill *[Lords]*, the Pension Schemes Bill *[Lords]*, the Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Bill *[Lords]* and the Statute Law (Repeals) Bill *[Lords]*;

followed by a motion relating to financial assistance to Opposition parties. The House may also be asked to consider any Lords messages which may be received.

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): I thank the Leader of the House for his statement. Could he answer two simple questions? First, he has courteously come tonight with a statement about tomorrow's business. Why could he not have come at seven o'clock with a statement about the business earlier this evening? Secondly, will he tell the House, so that there is no doubt, what will be the procedure if the Lords sustain their opposition to the Railways Bill when they receive our report tomorrow? What is the constitutional position?

Mr. Newton: On the first question, it will be within the hon. Gentleman's recollection, because he was here, that there was criticism from some quarters of my intervention at seven o'clock on the ground that, even as a brief point of order, it took time out of a guillotined debate. Some of that criticism was perhaps subsequently deployed for other reasons, but at any rate that criticism was made.

If I had made a statement, which would have been followed by extensive questioning, that would certainly have damaged a guillotined debate and would have been a legitimate cause for complaint among those involved with the Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill. As for the hon. Gentleman's second question, it is for others to give advice on the rest of the matters that he raised.

Mr. Jerry Hayes (Harlow): In thanking my right hon. Friend for an interesting and entertaining evening, may I ask whether he agrees that it does not bestow any great dignity on the House if certain Members, from whatever party, sabotage democratic procedures in such a way that the——

Madam Speaker: Order. We are dealing with a business statement. We are discussing tomorrow's business, not making long statements about what has gone on, which I deplore as much as anyone in the House. If the hon. Gentleman has a question about tomorrow's business, I will hear it. But that is all that I will hear.

Mr. Hayes: I am most grateful for that, Madam Speaker. Does my right hon. Friend agree with Madam Speaker that it would be quite wrong for any further sabotage to take place tomorrow?

Mr. Newton: I can hardly decline to agree with Madam Speaker. More to the point, I should like to make the point in response to my hon. Friend—it is relevant to the business statement—that one of the reasons for the statement was our inability to get through business that was properly laid for today, because of tactics in the Division Lobbies which exceeded anything that I have seen in 20 years in the House.

Mrs. Margaret Beckett (Derby, South): I had not intended to respond to the business statement, because I did not want to detain the House at this hour. However, it should be put on the record that it is because the Government sought to stampede their business through the House earlier tonight that they will have to come back tomorrow with business which, if they had proceeded reasonably through proper discussion and agreement, we could have dealt with tonight. It serves the Government right.

Mr. Newton: If the right hon. Lady thinks that that kind of point justifies the blocking tactics that we saw in the Division Lobby today, this is a very sorry day for this place.

Mrs. Angela Knight (Erewash): Does my right hon. Friend agree that the disgraceful behaviour of Opposition Members, the filibustering and the delays in the Lobby showed the real negation of democracy tonight?

Mr. Newton: I agree that were those tactics to be seen again, that would raise real questions about the commitment of those on the Opposition Front Bench to democratic procedures in the House.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): Will not tomorrow's business be rather crowded, as there are already many orders set out in the Remaining Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions on the Order Paper? Instead of having to come to the House to make repeated business statements, would it not be better for the Government to recognise that they have put themselves in a hole through their insistence on regarding Parliament as a legislative sausage machine and extend the business into next week so that we can have a proper timetable for debate on issues such as unemployment, the difficulties of manufacturing industry and the difficulties facing people on low incomes? We could very usefully spend next week debating a host of subjects if we did not have this pressure behind us all the time.

Mr. Newton: If there is any pressure on tomorrow's business of the kind to which the hon. Gentleman objects, the fault lies with the tactics that were used by the Opposition tonight.

Mr. Tony Marlow (Northampton, North): If there are any messages from the other place tomorrow, at what stage in our proceedings with they be taken? Will they be taken before or after the debate on the motion on pay for Opposition parties?

Mr. Newton: I obviously cannot predict the timing without knowing the timing of progress in another place. However, I anticipate that the timing would be such that the debate on the motion to which my hon. Friend referred would be after the consideration of Lords messages.

Mr. Alex Salmond (Banff and Buchan): The Leader of the House must stop whining about the proceedings earlier

[Mr. Alex Salmond]

this evening and address the points at issue. Why is it not possible to make a business statement after guillotined business, as opposed to making points of order during guillotined business?

Mr. Newton: Because, as I said at the time, the obvious need for the House to consider the message from the Lords in our view—and I make no apology for that—made it right to give the House notice of the intention to discuss those messages at the earliest possible moment, and that is what I did.

Mr. Peter Luff (Worcester): Does my right hon. Friend agree that the appalling scenes that we witnessed earlier this evening, including deliberate attempts to undermine the authority of the Chair, owed a great deal to the Labour party's embarrassment over the fact that it did not have enough hon. Members in the House to achieve a decent vote in the Division Lobby? Labour played for time to allow Labour Members to return. What conversations will my right hon. Friend have through the usual channels to ensure that the Labour party has the courtesy to have adequate numbers of hon. Members here in good time for the debates tomorrow?

Mr. Newton: I have no doubt that there will be some discussions about that matter and others through the usual channels. At least, I hope that there will be such discussions. In view of the terms used by my hon. Friend, the worst thing about tonight is that there is no sign that those on the Opposition Front Bench even have the grace to be embarrassed about it.

Mr. Graham Riddick (Colne Valley): Will my right hon. Friend confirm that the motions relating to football spectators are the motions that we should have debated this evening, and that those motions were on the Order Paper as a result of a request from the official Opposition? Bearing in mind the fact that that business was lost today as a result of the Labour party's disgraceful behaviour, why are we to debate it tomorrow? Why not just drop it?

Mr. Newton: That business was placed on the Order Paper properly. While I have every sympathy with and share the irritation expressed by my hon. Friend, it is proper that business that is placed on the Order Paper properly, as this busines was, should be discussed properly —if the Opposition allow that to happen tomorrow.

Mr. Raymond S. Robertson (Aberdeen, South): In responding to my right hon. Friend's business statement 48 hours ago, the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) said that it was a "constitutional outrage". Is not the true constitutional outrage the antics of the Labour party, which has lost both the argument and the votes tonight?

Mr. Newton: Yes.

Mr. Patrick Nicholls (Teignbridge): Given that we are debating so many fascinating and interesting matters tomorrow, would it be possible to squeeze in an extra debate on the tactics that were adopted this evening, and give the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) the opportunity to repudiate Labour Whips who lied about the figures in the Division Lobby in an attempt to get divisions declared void?

Mr. Newton: I shall bear that request in mind, although it might cause some difficulty if I were to make a supplementary business statement immediately.

Mr. Eric Pickles (Brentwood and Ongar): May I add my support to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer)? Tomorrow's business is full, and perhaps it might be appropriate to drop the debate on money for the Opposition parties. Perhaps it might also be made clear that the use of books to block the Serjeant at Arms from coming through the door is singularly inappropriate parliamentary action.

Mr. Newton: It was the episode with the books, which I had heard about, that led me to say earlier that, while every hon. Member has seen ups and downs, to put it mildly, over a long period—in my case, 20 years—I have never seen tactics like that adopted, whether in this or any other cause.

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): Would it not be easier to handle business in the House if we met a little more often? When we come back to debate the Queen's Speech, we shall have been away for 14 out of 17 weeks. Since the election of the present Prime Minister, the House has not been sitting for 40 per cent. of those weeks. That is why some of us thought that the vote tonight was disgraceful.

Mr. Newton: The hon. Gentleman has expressed those views in various other ways before. I can only say that they do not appear to be shared by the large number of hon. Members who clearly wish to see progress on the Jopling report.

Mr. Rod Richards (Clwyd, North-West): When we debate the financing of Opposition parties, will my right hon. Friend ensure that there is time to debate the appalling behaviour of the Labour party, and will he ensure that there is time to debate the lack of discipline in it, in the context of a complete absence of leadership? Will he also ensure that there is time tomorrow to ask the question, "When will the Buddha speak?"

Mr. Newton: I shall do my best to ensure that there is time available to debate those matters, but it will depend, once again, on the Opposition, being prepared to behave in a reasonably orderly fashion.

Mr. Derek Enright (Hemsworth): Is it not the case that the incompetence and clumsiness of those on the Government Front Bench makes an elephant look like a dainty ballet dancer?

Mr. Newton: There is nothing in the behaviour of those on the Government Front Bench that leads to, or justifies, the blocking of Division Lobbies with books so as to prevent proper procedures in the House.

Mr. Nick Harvey (North Devon): On the subject of the behaviour of the Government Front Bench, will the Leader of the House give us an assurance that if the Government get into similar problems over time tomorrow, the Government Whips will be restrained from physically assaulting hon. Members?

Mr. Newton: That is a serious allegation. I have no doubt that if the Hon. Gentleman wishes to persist with it, Madam Speaker will cause it to be looked at.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. That is enough. We have to move on to the petition.

PETITON

Forestry Commission Land

1.34 am

Mr. Christopher Gill (Ludlow): I beg leave to present a petition signed by more than 800 people living in Ludlow and surrounding areas, expressing their concern about the loss of public access when Forestry Commission woodlands are sold. The petition states:

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons shall ensure that if any further land owned or managed by the Forestry Commission is sold, provision shall be made that the public shall continue to enjoy freedom of access for recreational activities in perpetuity.

To lie upon the Table.

Elephant Conservation

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Kirkhope.]*

1.34 am

Mr. Tony Banks (Newham, North-West): In retrospect, this is probably not the best night to have the Adjournment debate, but I am, none the less, grateful that I was given the opportunity.

You, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I have common concerns with regard to the welfare of animals. I strongly recommend to you a wonderful book by Heathcote Williams, entitled "Sacred Elephant". The book is a combination of epic poem, pictures and prose. It moves me to tears whenever I read it because it tells of a gentle giant of a creature with a complex social structure, a language, great intelligence, sensitivity and emotions—a glorious mystical creature at first revered by man but later killed, mutilated, exploited, tortured and humiliated by man.

The elephant's interaction with man goes back into the mists of antiquity. Brahma, it is said, concealed in each of the animals a profound secret. The elephant was

"a beast of the moon with crescent tusks who has emerged from the churning seas."

He said that he had concealed wisdom. Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, had the head of an elephant towering above her own, and elephants pulling her chariots of knowledge. To the early Christians, the elephant was the bearer of all infirmities and lord protector, treading serpents underfoot. The Romans believed that the elephant was a religious animal. Pliny observed it

"worshipping the sun and stars and purifying itself at the new moon, bathing in the river and invoking the heavens."

Those are the myths about the elephant—the facts are even more astounding. They reveal a creature remarkably like ourselves, but with one vital exception—elephants do not possess our obscene cruelty. When an elephant gives birth, another female—the midwife elephant—will stand by until the process is complete. The females will never desert their young. The young show respect for the old. Among land mammals, the only brain larger than man's is the elephant's. Elephants can communicate sub-sonically with each other. Low-frequency sounds can travel more than 12 miles. The only other example of low-frequency communication among animals is the call of the whale, another highly developed social creature. It is said that, with the single exception of the whale, the elephant is the finest swimmer of all mammals. Journeys of more than 300 miles have been recorded.

Elephants never attack the weak, even when being hunted. Threatened and attacked by overwhelming odds, the bulls will place themselves in the line of fire, dying in the cause of the greater good, and protecting the young. They can live for up to 200 years, but few are left to die naturally. Captured and tied up for hours in a logging camp, an elephant will commit suicide. Elephants mourn and bury their dead. A captured elephant will perform last rites upon itself. An elephant in distress will weep salt tears —something that we thought only human beings did.

In today's world, the elephant has much cause to weep, and so have we. Last century, there were probably 10 million elephants, in 1970 there were 2 million, in 1979 there were an estimated 1·3 million and in 1989 there were fewer than 625,000. When I had a similar Adjournment debate on the subject in May 1989, the information

[Mr. Tony Banks]

provided by the Minister for Overseas Development indicated that the elephant population in Africa could be as low as 300,000 to 400,000.

Since 1970, the main cause of the decline has been killing for ivory—ivory for billiard balls, children's toys, jewellery, carvings and personal seals; magnificent creatures slaughtered for ephemeral trash.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, CITES, listed the Indian elephant on appendix I in 1976. The African elephant was not placed in appendix I until 1989. A worldwide ban on the ivory trade was finally implemented in January 1990, but with a number of countries entering reservations, including the United Kingdom on behalf of Hong Kong. The price of ivory has been greatly reduced, but the demand is still there.

Before the last CITES meeting in Kyoto, an upsurge in poaching was reported in many parts of Africa. Clearly, ivory traders were hoping that the ivory ban would be weakened. They were disappointed, but the traders will try again, supported by a number of African countries.

Will the Minister give the House an unequivocal assurance that, at the next CITES meeting, the British Government will not waver when the question of reopening a legal ivory trade will undoubtedly be raised?

The Government informed me in July this year that they spend £2·85 million on conservation projects which may —I emphasise the word may—include benefits for elephants, but the sum is tiny in comparison with the scale of the problem and the significance of the objective: to save the African elephant from extinction. In Zimbabwe, the department of national parks and wildlife management literally ran out of money for four months of this year. As a consequence, rhino and elephant poachers had a free hand, and 85 white rhino and an unknown number of elephants were killed. Many elephant carcases were reported to have been seen along the base of the Zambesi escarpment.

Will the Government announce a substantial increase in funds dedicated to elephant conservation schemes in Africa? Money is needed for helicopters, infra-red detection equipment and Land-Rovers. All are desperately needed.

We in this country might have some economic problems, but saving the African elephant is far more significant. Economic problems, rather like Governments, come and go, but should the African elephant go it will never come back. An announcement of a significant increase in funding for elephant conservation schemes from the Government would receive widespread support in the House and country.

The great paradox of elephant conservation in Africa is that, while the total number of elephants is falling, there are a few areas where local over-population occurs. As a result, steps are being taken to control the elephant population, and culling is the usual method adopted. About 500 elephants are killed each year in the Kruger national park to keep South Africa's sole remaining sizeable elephant population at about 8,000.

Zimbabwe usually kills a few thousand each year, but in December 1991, the director of the Zimbabwe wildlife department announced the need to eliminate half the country's elephant population. If it goes through, it will kill some 35,000 animals.

Culling of elephants is cruel, inhumane and ethically wrong. There are alternatives, and I am deeply grateful to Ian Redmond, co-ordinator of the African Ele-Fund for providing me with details. Culling is portrayed as the humane, almost clinical, removal of a proportion of the population. Whole families of elephants are surrounded and killed in order to avoid leaving stressed individuals or groups who have lost their close relatives. That reasoning ignores the higher social organisation of elephant clans, their ability to communicate over several kilometres by means of infrasonic distress calls and their acute sense of smell. In addition, calves kept alive to be sold into captivity undergo severe trauma. Most are destined for a short life of social and sensory deprivation.

The question is whether culling can pay for conservation. It is often said that sales of elephant products resulting from culling operations can help to pay for conservation work. Yet culling elephants is itself an expensive business. In 1989, a Zimbabwean warden estimated that it cost $102 per elephant to cull 500, and a further $334 per animal to recover the carcases. At those prices, the proposed cull of 35,000 elephants would cost the Zimbabwean authorities more than $15 million.

Then the question of whose elephants they are arises. When elephants cross international boundaries, they create problems for wildlife managers. Elephant populations are calculated on a national basis, and management decisions taken accordingly. But is it right for one country, say, to provide artificial water holes which attract elephants from neighbouring countries, then count them all and decide that there are too many for the habitat to sustain and order a cull? That is questionable, especially when the resulting ivory and skins are intended to be sold to raise foreign exchange for the Government Treasury.

Revenue from tourism may suffer in two ways from culling—first, tourists who oppose culling are likely to visit other countries with more benign attitudes to elephants and, secondly, as long as elephants perceive humans in vehicles as harbingers of death, high-quality, high-profit, close-quarter observations by tourists will be difficult.

Many scientists believe that elephant populations will find their own level if left alone, but that may fluctuate in cycles. The natural way allows elephants to survive in extreme situations in genetic terms, but the survival of the fittest will prevail. Culling, on the other hand, does not improve the gene core. It reduces the genetic and cultural diversity of the population by wiping out families with the loss of their accumulated knowledge of local conditions and the end of their genetic lines. Most conservationists are fighting to maintain genetic diversity in populations of endangered species. Culling, as practised today, does exactly the opposite.

Increasing the areas available to elephants is an ideal solution, given the amount of pressure that man puts on herds. Given the profitability of eco-tourism, wildlife reserves are increasingly seen as an alternative, more sustainable way of managing elephant resources. It is much more profitable than agriculture.

Care for the Wild relies on voluntary donations for the removal of a large number of elephants. The relocation of elephants seems to be the way that management of the resource could be achieved. In Asia, elephants whose habitat has been converted to agriculture, or whose crop raiding behaviour becomes a problem, are moved. Individuals, especially bulls, are tranquillised and

transported on trucks or barges, and herds have been driven over considerable distances to save protected areas. African wildlife departments could learn from their Asian counterparts and adopt those techniques when conditions allow.

Recently, I had a meeting with members of Care for the Wild who were involved in the moving of complete family groups to suitable areas or other countries where elephant populations have been depleted by poaching. In July, Care for the Wild moved 500 elephants at a cost of £305 per head. New reserves are being set up in Zimbabwe by ranchers getting rid of uneconomic cattle. In one project, 800,000 acreas have been established and elephants moved there.

Zimbabwe national parks want a further 500 elephants removed from one of the areas early next year. Of course, an organisation such as Care for the Wild can greatly assist. It relies on voluntary donations. Recently, it received an exceedingly generous donation of £500,000 from Mr. Peter Borender, but more funds are desperately needed. Will the Government earmark special funds for removal schemes such as those operated by Care for the Wild?

Another possibility is elephant birth control. The Born Free Foundation has drawn up a three-year project for elephant fertility control under the supervision of Professor Roger Short, who recently published papers on the matter in *The Lancet*. Funds for the project are needed. They are not immense funds—certainly they are well within the compass of the Government to afford, and they would get the support of the House and the country as a whole. Will the Government discuss the Born Free Foundation project with a view to funding it?

Culling is not the only solution to the problem of local over-population of elephants. The alternatives presented here could, by capitalising on eco-tourism, be more profitable than culling, and would be more compatible with the mood of the public worldwide. They also have the advantage of saving rather than destroying the lives of elephants.

I quote:

"In Pali scriptures it is duly set forth 'that the form under which Buddha will descend to the earth for the last time, will be that of a beautiful young white elephant, open-jawed, with a head the colour of cochineal, with tusks shining like silver sparkling with gems, covered with a splendid netting of gold, perfect in its organs and limbs, and majestic in appearance'."

If that is the form in which Buddha returns to earth, he is likely to feel very lonely, as he could end up being the only elephant left.

1.49 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Tony Baldry): I am grateful to the hon. Member for Newham, North-West (Mr. Banks) for raising this important issue, and pay tribute to him for his long-standing interest in elephant protection and conservation. Elephant conservation is an interest I share personally and a cause to which the Government remain fully committed, as evidenced by the support on the Front Bench of my hon. Friend the Member for Leeds, North-East (Mr. Kirkhope).

I led the United Kingdom delegation at the conference in Kyoto last year of the parties to CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The discussion of the elephant issue loomed large. In talks with Ministers and senior representatives from African countries, I was able to hear at first hand of the problems they face in conserving their elephant population in their differing countries and of their concerns.

Since the CITES conference, we have been playing a full and, indeed, leading role in maintaining dialogue with various Governments and we have also been active in promoting and funding conservation projects. I therefore welcome this opportunity to review action on promoting elephant conservation.

The United Kingdom was among the first countries to recognise the seriousness of the threat to elephants from poaching and pressure of human populations. A number of United Kingdom-based organisations, from the World Wild Fund for Nature to Elefriends and others mentioned, have been active in ensuring people had a good understanding of possible threats to elephant populations. The Government have long been in the forefront of international efforts to save this magnificent creature from extinction, so can I set out some of the action that we are taking.

Under CITES, the Asian elephant has always been fully protected, and monitoring of trade in some African elephants began in 1976. Numbers continued to decline, and tighter restrictions were introduced the following year. Commercial trade was then allowed only if sanctioned by the exporting country.

Sadly, despite these efforts, the African elephant continued to suffer losses at the hands of ruthless, determined and well-organised poachers. In 1980, there were estimated to be some 1·3 million elephants in Africa. Less than 10 years later, only 600,000 or so survived.

By 1989, it was clear that the threat to the elephant was both serious and immediate. We decided that the African elephant should, without delay, be given the maximum protection available by the international community. We made clear our intention to support a worldwide ban on trade in elephant products. We went further and persuaded our European Community partners to join us in imposing an immediate ban on imports of ivory into the Community without waiting for a decision on a general international ban through CITES.

The whole question of the conservation of the African elephant and the proposed trade ban was fully discussed at the CITES conference held in 1989. Amid some controversy, the conference agreed to ban the ivory trade, but acknowledged that different elephant range states had different problems. The conference accordingly decided to leave the door open for countries that had stable or increasing elephant populations, and were able to meet strict conditions, to apply in due course to resume trade in their elephant populations. Such countries argued that income from any trade in elephant products could be reapplied to the overall conservation and would give local farmers and local people an incentive to protect elephants.

At the Kyoto conference, South Africa, on its own, and the four other Southern African countries which form the Southern African Centre for Ivory Marketing—SACIM—put forward proposals to reopen such trade under the conditions laid down in 1989. The SACIM countries are Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and Malawi. The essence of the conditions was that any proposals had to satisfy a panel of experts appointed by CITES that particular elephant populations were healthy and free from danger, and that any legal trade in ivory would not give rise to illegal trade threatening elephant populations in other countries.

[Mr. Tony Baldry]

The panel of experts' report indicated that some of those countries had managed to meet most of the conditions drawn up in 1989. Before the Kyoto conference, we had held extensive discussions with experts from around the world, and national and international organisations. We had examined all the available evidence, including the panel of experts' report, and I told the conference:

"the ban on trade imposed in 1989 has been highly effective: the price of ivory has plummeted taking with it interest in poaching. The UK is determined that there shall be no return to the dismal days before the ban, when poaching was rife. We have held extensive discussions with experts from around the world, and national and international organisations. We have examined all the available evidence and we have noted in particular that the Panel of Experts found continuing illegal trade elsewhere in Southern Africa. Further, the Panel commented on the problems of controlling open bush borders. We therefore remain unconvinced that any country can prevent the mixing of legal and illegal ivory. Allowing trade in other elephant products would inevitably be seen by some as a precursor to the resumption of trade in ivory. This would lead to more poaching and mounting ivory stock piles.

We recognise, however, that import bans alone can achieve nothing. A United Kingdom—or even a global—boycott of elephant products will not guarantee the survival of elephants. Their well-being depends instead on the efforts of the African countries where they are found. We understand the pressures which poverty and growing populations place on some countries. The burden of conserving elephants for all our children to enjoy must not fall on them alone."

That is what I said in Kyoto and, against that background, we and the rest of the international community agreed that the existing ban on the trade in elephant products should continue.

That decision left the SACIM countries feeling hurt and misunderstood, and it is clear that opinion within Africa remained worryingly divided on elephant conservation. There was even talk of some countries leaving CITES. So we saw an urgent need to develop greater understanding among all concerned on the question of elephant conservation and trade. The challenge was to look for a way forward that took account of the legitimate concerns and aspirations of elephant range states, without jeopardising the progress made since the introduction of the ivory trade ban, and which recognised the importance of a coherent and co-ordinated African approach to elephant conservation.

At our instigation, the European Community pressed strongly in Kyoto for the dialogue between elephant range states and other interested parties to be maintained between conferences. Since then, the United Kingdom has taken the lead in promoting and co-ordinating further discussions.

In November last year, the United Kingdom led a delegation of EC officials to Africa to discuss the issues of elephant conservation and trade in depth. The main objective of the mission was to explore the scope for building consensus among African states on the elephant and ivory trade issue before the next CITES conference in 1994.

During nearly two weeks of intensive discussions, the mission visited four countries and met representatives of nine African Governments, including the SACIM group, as well as a number of non-governmental organisations, field workers and independent experts.

The mission was thus able to gain a valuable insight into the problems which African countries face in trying to conserve their elephant populations. It recognised the validity of the concerns of the countries seeking a reopening of trade, whose elephant populations were stable or increasing, and remained relatively unaffected by poaching—except possibly in Zimbabwe, which has had some recent problems.

On the other hand, other range states felt equally strongly that any relaxation in the CITES trade ban would put their own more vulnerable elephant populations at risk. From all Governments, there was a recognition that countries should be able, other things being equal, to use wildlife sustainably, and that trade could play a part in that.

It was therefore clear to the mission that there was both scope and need to work harder to diminish the misunderstandings and tension evident at the CITES conference. In the light of its discussions, the mission concluded that the best way of promoting dialogue and improving understanding would be to promote a further meeting of key African elephant range states and other interested parties to prepare the ground for whatever might be proposed at the 1994 CITES conference.

Following the mission, we consulted extensively on the proposals for a further meeting, which were supported in principle by African states, our EC partners and other interested parties. We proposed a meeting covering the concerns of the SACIM countries and South Africa as well as those of the other African range states.

We hoped that such a meeting would provide an opportunity for southern African countries and range states from elsewhere in Africa to explain their concerns in a calmer climate than has been possible at CITES conferences.

We have since been trying to finalise an agenda on the basis I have outlined, but this has not proved to be an easy task. In particular, the SACIM countries have suggested that the main purpose of the discussion should be to explore the possibility of persuading others to accept the SACIM position on the reopening of the ivory trade.

While we recognise SACIM's particular problems and concerns, and agree that it is important that any meeting should devote a substantial part of the agenda to those concerns, other parties have indicated that any meeting should allow enough room for their perspectives and points of view to be considered alongside SACIM's. That must be right. The conservation of the African elephant is essentially an African issue, which will be resolved only if we can find a way forward that all parts of Africa can support.

We are now trying to draw up a balanced agenda that provides an adequate opportunity for all the regions of Africa to express their views on this complex and sensitive subject. I remain hopeful that we shall be able to find a basis for discussion that is acceptable to all those involved.

Some African countries have already made impressive progress in improving the management of their wildlife resources. In Kenya, for example, the Kenyan wildlife service, under Richard Leakey's leadership, has dramatically improved the management of Kenya's wildlife and its network of protected areas. Kenya has succeeded in virtually eliminating elephant poaching, and has made impressive strides in developing intelligence networks and increasing the involvement of local communities.

Kenya's experience has shown how much the conservation of Africa's elephants and other wildlife depends on national wildlife departments that are adequately resourced, well organised and well managed. The problem is that not all elephant range states have the resources and expertise that they need to monitor,

manage and control their elephant populations. That is why I acknowledged in Kyoto that the burden of conserving elephants for all our children should not fall on African countries alone. I was therefore very pleased to be able to announce during the conference that the Government were committing an additional £600,000 to support a number of elephant conservation projects in Africa.

Following the conference, we were able to establish a close and constructive dialogue with African countries with strategically important elephant populations, and with conservation groups experienced in setting up and managing elephant conservation projects. As a result, we identified worthwhile projects to strengthen the capacity of African wildlife departments to combat poaching, and to assist local communities to develop conservation measures.

We have provided support for, among others, the wildlife species protection department in Zambia; the Botswana wildlife department, to purchase equipment needed for anti-poaching activities; and a project to involve local communities more closely in the conservation and management of desert elephants in Namibia. We are also co-financing non-governmental organisations in the community-level Campfire programme of wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe. The support of local people in Africa is vital if long-term protection for endangered wildlife is to be sustained.

More generally, since 1990 the Government have contributed nearly £20 million to wildlife conservation projects in Africa through the overseas aid programme, many of which contribute directly or indirectly to elephant conservation.

Good progress has been made since the introduction of the CITES ivory trade ban at the beginning of 1990. The market for ivory has collapsed, and elephant poaching has been dramatically reduced. Elephant populations are recovering. However, poaching is still not under control in a number of African countries—hence the fears of many that a resumption of legal trade in elephants, without watertight controls, could provide a cover for illegitimate activities. The continuing and appalling decline of rhino populations in Africa is testimony to that.

We have therefore welcomed moves to improve cross-border co-operation and the exchange of intelligence on the illegal wildlife trade. A conference held in Lusaka in December last year, attended by law enforcement experts from a number of African countries and other interested governmental and non-governmental agencies—including our Overseas Development Administration—proposed the establishment of a task force of law enforcement officers from a number of African countries to investigate and smash criminal networks involved in illegal wildlife trafficking. Negotiations on that proposal are continuing, and we very much hope that they will be successfully concluded during the course of 1994.

We have, I believe, demonstrated our commitment by providing cash for elephant conservation projects, and through the prominent part that we have played—and will continue to play—in international efforts to promote dialogue, improve understanding and develop consensus. We have always made it clear that we shall seek to maintain the ivory trade ban for as long as necessary; however, trade bans alone cannot guarantee the elephant's survival. We shall continue to work constructively with African elephant range states, our EC partners, NGOs, other CITES parties and national and international conservation bodies that share our concern for the future of these magnificent creatures, described by John Donne as "nature's great masterpiece".

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at four minutes past Two o'clock.

House of Commons

Thursday 4 November 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Oral Answers to Questions

NATIONAL FINANCE

VAT

1. **Mr. Barron:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received on the imposition of VAT.

5. **Dr. Godman:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received regarding the proposed imposition of 17·5 per cent. VAT on domestic fuel; and if he will make a statement.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Kenneth Clarke): I have received a large number of representations about VAT.

Mr. Barron: Is the Chancellor aware that a survey published today shows that many Conservative-controlled councils and their councillors have refused to support the Government's imposition of VAT on fuel, because, like many people, they believe that it does not recognise the ability to pay and therefore is grossly unfair? Will the Chancellor review that tax, withdraw it and take notice of what the country is saying—that millions of people believe that it should be stopped now?

Madam Speaker: I understand that question 5 is linked with this question.

Mr. Clarke: Yes, Madam Speaker.

Since the Act was passed, there has been—[HON. MEMBERS: "We cannot hear."] The reason why people cannot hear me is that the microphones are not working.

Madam Speaker: If the microphones are not working, the Chancellor can raise his voice.

Mr. Clarke: I first came here when music hall was really music hall and us old troupers can make ourselves heard in the House when we try.

Since the Finance Act was passed, there has been a large campaign. I accept that many people, particularly the elderly, have been made quite fearful of the tax before it has been imposed. However, there was such a fall in gas and electricity prices during the 1980s that, even with the tax imposed in full, fuel bills will be no higher than they were 10 years ago. Moreover, the Government will come forward with a package of measures to help those who have difficulty paying the new tax. In my opinion, the sensible approach for a House of Commons that passed the tax some months ago is to wait to see the package of help that will be forthcoming.

Dr. Godman: I was not informed of the linking of questions, Madam Speaker, I thought that it was a common parliamentary courtesy to be informed of such a linking.

Madam Speaker: Indeed it is. Is the hon. Gentleman prepared to put his question now, though?

Dr. Godman: Yes, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you.

Dr. Godman: You are on top form again, Madam Speaker.

I have received many representations on the imposition of the tax. It is frightening many elderly people everywhere. Will the Chancellor give an assurance that he will fully protect those on low incomes, especially those on incomes that are just slightly above income support? It is a lousy rotten tax and it has caused a lot of fear among elderly people, particularly those on small occupational pensions.

Mr. Clarke: As I have said, we are all receiving a lot of representations. I hope that the hon. Gentleman will not join those who are arousing the real fears felt by people throughout the country. When my right hon. Friend announced the introduction of the tax we said that before it was introduced we would create a package of measures to give help to that section of the population who would have difficulty paying. That package will be announced at the usual time—my Budget statement.

Sir Terence Higgins: In framing his Budget will my right hon. and learned Friend bear in mind the principles that guided Iain Macleod and myself when we steered the original legislation on value added tax through the House? We believed that there should be only one positive rate of VAT, with relief through zero rating for those items of greatest importance to those on low incomes. If my right hon. and learned Friend decides that there should be a tax increase in the Budget—although at this stage of the economic cycle I think that that would be a mistake—before considering anything else will he introduce VAT on fuel at 17·5 per cent. immediately, with an adequate compensation package?

Mr. Clarke: I well remember my right hon. Friend steering VAT through the House of Commons—it was a controversial tax, although the replacement of purchase tax was popular. The measure did not enjoy a smooth passage then; I remember voting unsuccessfully with my right hon. Friend to try to exclude at least one of the zero-rated items. Although the initial measure was good, it was not perfect, and, since its introduction, successive Governments have, from time to time, extended its scope. In the climate of our commitment to the Rio targets and a need for more revenue in the spring of this year, it seemed logical and sensible to raise part of the revenue in the March Budget from that measure, with a promise of a package of help. Between now and 30 November, I will bear in mind my right hon. Friend's other representations about the Budget.

Mr. Cormack: Does my right hon. and learned Friend accept that the people who are most worried about VAT on fuel are those who do not qualify for benefit? Will he give a complete and categorical assurance that those people's

interests will be taken into account? Will he promise that we will never again be given an announcement, then have to wait almost a year for the package?

Mr. Clarke: As to the assurance, I shall bear in mind what my hon. Friend says. While we wait for the package of measures, may I repeat that people should not arouse fears, but should explain to today's pensioners that the level of bills that they will pay will be no greater than those previously faced by pensioners. Some pensioners will receive help before the measure is introduced. As to introducing tax measures that do not take effect until 12 months or two years hence, my hon. Friend's political message is right. If we had immediately introduced the tax earlier this year, we would not be debating it in the autumn. It is the campaigning which has aroused feeling. The downside of that process is that it means that many hon. Members' long-standing hope that there should be more consultation about the details of complicated tax measures which Chancellors believe that they should introduce becomes ever less likely. The moment that one gives advance warning of anything in the British system one merely arouses noisy campaigns to try to stop the measure.

Mr. Gordon Brown: Will the Chancellor confirm the report in the *Financial Times* that £600 million was wrongly paid in tax refund to the Kuwaiti Government —more than enough money to prevent any pensioner from having to pay VAT next year? Will he also confirm that if the loopholes, about which everyone knows, in the business expansion scheme, executive share options and advance corporation tax were closed, no family would have to pay VAT next year? He could announce the closure of those loopholes this afternoon. Is it incompetence that prevents the Government from acting, or is it that too many people who benefit from abusing the system are too close to the Conservative party?

Mr. Clarke: When we investigate the matter closely, to discover whether closing the hon. Gentleman's so-called loopholes would raise any revenue, it becomes obvious that that would be about as much use as brass washers. Individual tax issues are looked at in the ordinary way by the Inland Revenue, but the rules on sovereign immunity are partly determined by international law which cannot be repudiated. The hon. Gentleman's list of other so-called loopholes does not stand up to the slightest examination. He claimed that £1 billion could be raised by not abolishing stamp duty; we have not abolished stamp duty, so that is not relevant. The difficulty is that the Labour party, which was committed to high taxation, no longer knows whether it is. It tries to pretend to the country that it can get away with everything it promises by making claims about illusory loopholes being abused by millionaires. Examination shows that those loopholes do not exist.

Mr. Forman: Returning to the original question, may I ask my right hon. and learned Friend whether he realises that many Conservative Members would be pleased if he were to adopt a robust and reforming approach to VAT? In that context, is he aware that the broader the base of that tax, the lower can be the rates—other things being equal —and the simpler can be the structure?

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: That has guided successive Governments and that is why both Labour and Conservative Governments have broadened the base over the years. One improvement that the Government made when they first came in was to get rid of the separate bands which were much complained about after the Government's predecessors introduced them.

The important thing about the taxation burden is that it should be fair and should be bearable by the less well-off. The VAT on fuel provision in the March Budget was only one measure in a Budget where most of the revenue was to be gained from those in work, including the better off. Understandably, the campaign has focused on VAT on fuel, but it has been an exaggerated campaign which has aroused groundless fears among many people who are now feeling vulnerable about paying their heating bills.

Manufacturing Industry

2. **Mr. Bill Michie:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to improve the competitiveness and capacity of Britain's manufacturing industries.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Anthony Nelson): The Government's role is to create the best climate for industry and to ensure that economic recovery is sustained through low inflation and sound public finances.

Mr. Michie: It is a pity that we have not yet seen the evidence of their success. When the Chancellor draws up the Budget, will he take note of the British shipping taxation proposals and create a level playing field for our merchant fleet, bearing in mind the terrible crisis in our shipbuilding at the moment?

Mr. Nelson: I hear what the hon. Gentleman says and I know that my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor met representatives of the shipping industry this week. I assure the hon. Gentleman that his representations will be taken carefully into account.

Mr. Nigel Evans: Will my hon. Friend confirm that during the past three years interest rates have gone down from 15 to 6 per cent. and that that has wiped £11 billion off interest charges for British industry? Is not that particularly helpful to manufacturing industry?

Mr. Nelson: My hon. Friend is right. That is £11 billion of cash flow going through businesses which otherwise would not have done. That must be added to the facts that unit wage costs have declined and that we have low inflation and a more competitive exchange rate. Our manufacturing industries, as well as other businesses, have the edge in competition at home and abroad.

Ms Eagle: Does the Minister realise with what cynicism the workers of Cammell Laird, who are listening to his reassurances about the future of British shipbuilding, treat his remarks? Despite assurances and pleas of sympathy from the Government, Cammell Laird has now closed and the rest of our once-great shipbuilding industry is under constant threat. It looks as though the legacy of the Government will be that Britain, as an island nation, will have no shipbuilding industry left. What value are the Minister's reassurances when the industry is being devastated?

Mr. Nelson: Of course, I understand the problems in the hon. Lady's constituency to which she refers. I acknowledge the importance of the shipbuilding industry

nationally, as well as the importance of other manufacturing industries which employ some 4·2 million people.

In the previous Budget, we introduced a number of measures, not the least of which was the time-limited enhancement on capital allowance. That was specifically to assist those industries and to enhance the export credit facilities that are available to them. We still have a shipbuilding capability, which admittedly is much smaller, but specialist. Some areas have benefited from orders from the defence and other spheres, and I hope that that will continue to be the case.

Unemployment

3. **Dr. Liam Fox:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to what he attributes the fall in unemployment earlier than expected in the economic cycle.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: Unemployment has fallen by 84,000 since January of this year. This may in part reflect the improvements that we have made to labour market flexibility as part of our supply-side reforms and our continuing efforts to keep the level of non-wage costs on employers down to levels lower than those in other European economies. Our opt-out from the social chapter is an important element in encouraging the growth of employment in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Fox: Does my right hon. and learned Friend accept that as the economy gathers pace, it will do so not only because of the labour reforms of the 1980s but because of a whole range of supply-side reforms? Does he further accept that those reforms were totally opposed by the Opposition and have been possible only because we have had consistent and consecutive Conservative Governments?

Mr. Clarke: I quite agree with my hon. Friend. Not only have we improved the labour market, but we have created a much better climate for investment, for small businesses and for business start-ups and we were much more successful than most of our competitors in creating new jobs before the recession from which we are now emerging first struck us. Almost all the relevant measures were opposed by the Labour party, which still seeks to impose on us the costs of the social chapter. Labour still harks back to a regulated labour market and, as we saw only last night, its vision of the future is to keep in nationalisation the great traditional industries of this country.

Mr. Beith: Does the Chancellor realise that the rosy picture that he has painted is not true of the construction industry, in which the recovery is still very fragile? Has he noted the representations of construction employers, to the effect that as many as 100,000 jobs could be lost in the industry if there are cuts in capital expenditure in the Budget? Does he realise that this is the right stage in the cycle to ensure, if possible, higher capital expenditure in construction—expenditure that will bring rewards in terms of taxes paid by employees, fewer benefits paid out and assets obtained for the future at a good price?

Mr. Clarke: I am well aware of the troubled state of the construction industry. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that that is a matter for great concern. The Government sustained the level of public sector capital investment in the last Budget and we are making great progress in delivering private sector investment in capital projects in the public services. We must certainly build on that. The recent placing of contracts for the Jubilee line shows what can be achieved and there are a number of other projects across the country in which private sector management skills and finance could boost capital investment and help the construction industry.

Mr. Anthony Coombs: Does my right hon. and learned Friend agree that the best way to protect and promote employment is to ensure that our industry is competitive by reducing unit costs and by precisely the sort of productivity improvements that have been and are being achieved by manufacturing industry? Is he aware that companies in my constituency are bringing over from Germany capital equipment that can be used profitably here to re-export goods? Because Germany is weighed down by the costs of the social chapter and other social costs, that is not possible there. Should not we therefore avoid the social chapter as far as possible, to enable our industry to be competitive? Do not the Opposition fail to recognise that?

Mr. Clarke: British industry's achievement—of continuing to improve productivity throughout 1993—is an extremely important basis for our strengthening recovery. Productivity increased by 4½ per cent. That is an extremely good record which I am sure underlies our good performance in non-EC export markets. We will do better in our EC markets once our European competitors and their markets start to show the sort of recovery that is beginning here in Britain.

My hon. Friend's other message is one that we need to reiterate over and over again. German employers are envious of the conditions that we have created, which are more attractive for inward investment and the creation of new jobs.

VAT

4. **Mr. Bennett:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has recently held with representatives of the publishing industry concerning the widening of VAT.

The Paymaster General (Sir John Cope): Treasury Ministers have recently met representatives from all sectors of the publishing industry and their views are being carefully considered in the preparations for the Budget.

Mr. Bennett: What income would the Government obtain if they imposed VAT on newspapers, books and magazines? Does the right hon. Gentleman have any estimate of the number of local newspapers that might close as a result of its imposition? What would happen to minority authors? How many books might not be published as a result and how many magazines would close? If the Minister addes up the figures perhaps he will agree that such a move would do far more damage to the spread of information and knowledge than benefit to the Treasury's revenues.

Sir John Cope: We have had suggestions of a large number of figures in answer to the points that the hon. Gentleman has made, but I will not anticipate anything that my right hon. and learned Friend may want to say later.

Mr. James Hill: I am sure that my right hon. Friend has taken into consideration the fact that there is only one local paper in some areas and that, if they have to pay VAT, such papers are likely to go out of business. But they serve a community purpose. I am sure that my right hon. Friend will sympathetically consider single-paper areas such as Southampton.

Sir John Cope: That point has indeed been made in the representations to us.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: Was not it an election pledge by the Conservative party that no VAT would be imposed on magazines, newspapers or books? Will the Minister confirm that the imposition of VAT on these items would be regressive, would fuel inflation and would lead to the direct loss of well over 20,000 jobs? Will he also confirm that the same sum of money could be raised without any of these consequences if the Government blocked the inheritance tax loopholes that are abused by the very wealthy?

Sir John Cope: Once again the hon. Gentleman is trying to say that everything can be done by stopping-up tax avoidance in some way. He knows perfectly well, as I do, that every Finance Bill that has ever been introduced has involved closing loopholes. He is chasing a mirage. Of course the figures that he mentioned have been brought to our attention in the various representations to which I referred.

Mr. Congdon: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the publishing community's campaign against VAT on books would be a jolly sight more convincing if it were prepared to scrap the net book agreement that has pushed up and keeps up book prices?

Sir John Cope: I realise the point made by my hon. Friend, but I do not think that it arises in this context.

6. **Mr. Mullin:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much an average family paid per week in VAT in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1993.

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Stephen Dorrell): A couple with two children on average earnings paid VAT of £12·95 per week at today's prices in 1979-80 and an estimated £19·30 per week in 1993-94.

Mr. Mullin: Is not it clear that the public have been conned and that for four general elections the Conservative party has posed as the party of low taxation that cuts taxation, but has been quietly transferring the burden of tax from income tax to VAT? Is not it the truth that taxation has gone up under the Conservatives and is not that because it is expensive to maintain 3 million people who are permanently out of work? Is not the best way to cut tax to cut unemployment?

Mr. Dorrell: To take up the hon. Gentleman's phrase, the truth is that since 1979, we have been improving living standards for British people, which is what matters. Since 1979, take-home pay measured in today's terms for the same family to which the hon. Gentleman referred has risen by £81·50 a week. The hon. Gentleman is right that £6·35 of that increase has gone to pay VAT, but the other £75 a week has gone to improve living standards.

Mr. Bill Walker: Does my hon. Friend agree that VAT is an essential aspect of spending-side economics and that if we did not have the income from VAT we would not be able to meet the spending programmes, especially those in which the Opposition are constantly demanding increases?

Mr. Dorrell: My hon. Friend is right that VAT is, under this Government, and was under our predecessors, an important part of the total revenue-raising package. I ask the House to reflect on the significance of the fact that in Labour's Britain the standard rate of tax on a wage-earner involved in wealth creation was 33 per cent., while the standard rate of VAT on spending was 8 per cent. I should have thought that in a society where wealth creation was regarded as important, we would want—as the Government have—to cut the rate of tax on wealth creation even if that means an increase in the rate of tax on spending.

Mr. Marlow: Would my hon. Friend be kind enough to give an assurance that there is no way in which the Government will consider imposing more VAT on families in Britain if, later in the next Session, the Government intend to bring forward a Bill to re-route more taxpayers' money through Brussels to corrupt regimes in southern Europe so that hands may be greased and money can find its way into the pockets of some people's cronies?

Mr. Dorrell: My hon. Friend has introduced a general all-purpose question on taxation. I do not propose to get involved in speculation about our future tax policy. As for our obligations to our European partners, I am sure that my hon. Friend would want us to honour obligations entered into by the Government of the United Kingdom.

Ms Harman: Does the hon. Gentleman still refuse to recognise that VAT on gas and electricity is even more unpopular than the poll tax? Does he realise that it is dreaded by the public and that now 1,000 Tory councillors are backing Labour's demand that the Government should drop it? The Chancellor has a choice: either he can ditch it in his 30 November Budget or see it go down in the Finance Bill. Which is it to be?

Mr. Dorrell: The hon. Lady is scraping the bottom of the barrel in suggesting that our tax policy should be determined by the views of individual councillors. The one thing that all sides should agree about is that tax policy should be decided by the House. The Government's proposals for VAT on fuel and power have been repeatedly endorsed by the House. It is the House which makes that decision, not councils.

Mr. Sheldon: Is not the important aspect of value added tax the fact that until the recent decision to impose it on fuel and power, it was broadly neutral? That was because of zero rating. All other taxes except income tax are regressive, which means that VAT hurts most those who are least well off. As I have said, income tax is our only progressive tax, and the Government are determined to reduce that to help the most well off.

Mr. Dorrell: I remind the right hon. Gentleman and the House that it was the Liberal Deomcrats and not the Government who described the exemption of fuel and power from VAT as an anomaly. The hon. Member for Islington, South and Finsbury (Mr. Smith) proposed the introduction of an energy tax and asked the public to write to him with their reactions. Perhaps some of the letters that *The Sun* suggests should be written to my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor should be addressed to that

hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman will acknowledge, I think, that it was not the Government but the Institute for Fiscal Studies which analysed the income distribution effect of the last Budget, and concluded that it was broadly neutral across all income groups.

Mr. Duncan Smith: Does my hon. Friend agree that the Opposition are missing the key point, which is that as we changed the structure of direct and indirect tax we lowered the indirect taxation level, leaving most people with money to spend? That is one of the key reasons why we shall move faster as we come out of recession than our European counterparts who have failed to learn that lesson.

Mr. Dorrell: My hon. Friend is precisely right: not for the first time, the Opposition are missing the point. He is also right to draw attention to the fact that the prime objective of tax policy must surely be to encourage wealth creation. We cut the marginal rate of tax on wealth creation because we want to make people better off. That is why the man on average earnings with two children now enjoys take-home pay that is £81·50 a week higher than it was in 1979.

Trade Deficit

7. **Mr. Enright:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the deficit on visible trade for the first seven months of (a) 1993 and (b) 1992.

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Michael Portillo): The visible trade deficit was £8·75 billion in the first seven months of this year and £7 billion in the first seven months of last year.

Mr. Enright: Are not those figures deeply depressing, especially in view of the huge sums of taxpayers' money that were poured down the drain last year to devalue the pound and make us more competitive? Does not the Chief Secretary agree that it is crucial for us to sell more if we are to have a cat in hell's chance of a sustained non-inflationary recovery?

Mr. Portillo: The hon. Gentleman shows unusual enlightenment for an Opposition Member when he says that the crux of the matter is that we should sell more. The Government are concerned to make Britain more competitive. That is why we have kept Britain out of the social chapter. The hon. Gentleman's party is concerned to make Britain as uncompetitive as possible. I hope that, like me, he takes pleasure from the fact that during the past year our exports to areas outside the European Community rose by 11 per cent. and that Britain is more competitive. I hope that he will join me in saying that those are good achievements.

Mr. John Greenway: Is my right hon. Friend aware of yesterday's Touche Ross report on business prospects in Yorkshire and Humberside which points to clear signs of economic recovery in that region? As the economic recovery gathers pace, enabling us to make an impact on our trade balance, does he agree that the Government's policy must be to continue to bear down on inflation and encourage greater productivity and competitiveness in British industry?

Mr. Portillo: I am, indeed, pleased with the results of that survey. Recently, British management has got on top of its costs. Unit wage costs in this country have been falling while they have continued to rise in Japan and Germany. Our productivity is at record levels. Manufacturing productivity growth in Britain has been the strongest of all the G7 countries during the past year. Those are great achievements, and they offer good prospects for British industry.

Dr. Berry: Is the Chief Secretary aware that we have never had such a large trade deficit at this point in the business cycle, and that, for the first time ever, we have a record trade deficit in the midst of a recession? Who does he believe to be responsible for that?

Mr. Portillo: I would prefer the deficit to be less than it is. However, I notice that foreign investors are showing great confidence in our country. They are investing more in Britain through inward investment than they are in any other European country. We are benefiting from one third of all the inward investment coming into the European Community, and foreign investors are also willing to buy our stocks and gilts. That shows that the trade deficit is fundable and I believe that the Government should continue to pursue policies that make Britain more competitive and also act on the fiscal deficit to bring it down.

Public Spending

8. **Mr. Riddick:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to cut public spending.

Mr. Portillo: The Cabinet agreed in June to stick within existing ceilings for the new control total for the next two years, and to allow a maximum growth of 1 per cent. in 1996-97. Our spending plans will be set out in the Budget on 30 November.

Mr. Riddick: Does my right hon. Friend agree that every function of Government should be examined for possible savings? Is he aware that millions of pounds could be saved by reducing the size of the civil service bureaucracy, that £5 million could be saved by abolishing the unnecessary Equal Opportunities Commission and that further savings could be made by putting a stop to the absurd inquiry by British policemen into alleged war crimes in the Falklands? Many people are outraged by that inquiry, and feel that it should be ceased forthwith.

Mr. Portillo: As is his wont, my hon. Friend chooses some controversial topics to raise and, as one who likes to avoid controversy as much as possible, I shall not follow him down those lines of inquiry. However, I entirely agree with my hon. Friend's basic point, which is that we need carefully to scrutinise what Government do to ensure that the Government do only what is necessary and that they pass to the private sector that which they do not need to do. That is the basis of the fundamental reviews being conducted into a number of Departments at the moment, which will be extended to other Departments in the new year.

Mr. Skinner: Is the Minister aware that if we are to rid ourselves of the scourge of mass unemployment, rather than reducing public expenditure, the Government should be increasing it and introducing exchange and import controls to stop 20 million tonnes of coal coming into Britain? We should be exporting coal. In case the Minister is going to ask me how we bridge the gap on the public

sector borrowing requirement, I shall tell him now. We should be taxing the rich, the richest 5 per cent. of whom have had more than £50 billion in the past 14 Tory Government years. That is the way to resolve the problem, not by imposing VAT on fuel and light for the elderly and others in Britain.

Mr. Portillo: I am extremely grateful to the hon. Member. His is the authentic voice of the Labour party and I am pleased that, at this Question Time, he has reaffirmed that the policy of the Labour party is to raise taxes and increase public spending and controls. I am sure that he will join me in the pleasure that I feel that the hon. Member for Peckham (Ms Harman) has retained her place in the shadow Cabinet because I believe that she, too, is sympathetic to all those policies.

Retail Sales

9. **Mr. Dunn:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer by how much retail sales rose in the last three months for which figures are available against the same three months in the previous year; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: In the three months ending September, the volume of retail sales was nearly 4 per cent. higher than a year earlier, and at record levels.

Mr. Dunn: Do not the encouraging sales figures underline the current EC forecast that Britain's economy will grow faster than any other EC country, both this year and next year, and that this, taken alongside other positive economic indicators, means that we are now facing a sustained economic recovery?

Mr. Clarke: Yes, we are the only major European country that seems likely to record growth this year. There has now been growth for six successive quarters. Most forecasters expect that it will strengthen somewhat next year. That steadily rising level of consumer demand is reasonably encouraging. I therefore reinforce my hon. Friend's message and point out to him that this morning's figures for new car registrations—15 per cent. up on 12 months ago—are a further encouraging feature. We have a long way to go, but the recovery is very much there and shows every prospect of strengthening ahead of our European partners next year.

Mr. Andrew Smith: Now that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is literally taxing consumers until the pips squeak, by imposing VAT on fresh orange juice, will not retail sales be depressed and jobs destroyed in that rapidly growing industry? Is it not the case that the Government extend VAT in a knee-jerk reaction to their financial incompetence? Will not the public fear that that orange juice VAT is just the first course in a whole menu of Government VAT on food? Should not the Chancellor tell us now that there will be no imposition of VAT on any further food products?

Mr. Clarke: The hon. Gentleman knows that the measure that we passed last night, in the middle of a number of another type of votes that attracted more attention at the time, was a minor technical change. We have always taxed manufactured fruit juice in this country. There was a dispute and there have been tribunal cases about whether orange juice produced in factories was a manufactured fruit juice. When the matter was scrutinised in Committee it took about half an hour and the vote last night was eminently sensible and fair to apple juice producers. *[Interruption.]*

The Labour party has abandoned its previous economic policies and its previous proposals because they proved to be unpopular, but it cannot substitute for that all the nonsense about paying for everything out of non-existent loopholes and scratching around trying to build cases against technical amendments taken late at night.

Sir Peter Tapsell: While I fully support my right hon. and learned Friend's declared determination to reduce the fiscal deficit, I urge him to compensate for the deflationary effects that that is likely to have on retail sales by reducing our interest rates to nearer the much lower levels of Japan and the United States. There, real interest rates are less than half those in this country, even allowing for the somewhat pessimistic recent forecasts of the Bank of England about future inflationary trends here.

Mr. Clarke: We shall continue to determine monetary policy following the guidelines that we set out as a necessary discipline upon ourselves after our withdrawal from the exchange rate mechanism. There has been a steady reduction in interest rates in this country for a considerable time—about two years. That has helped to boost the recovery here and we shall have to ensure that the right conditions are retained here. We continue to have some of the lowest interest rates in the European Community and we are sustaining the strongest level of growth of any major economy within the Community.

VAT

10. **Mr. Alan W. Williams:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the percentage of total Government revenue raised by value added tax *(a)* in 1978-79 and *(b)* in 1992-93.

Sir John Cope: VAT accounted for 7·3 per cent. of general Government receipts in 1978-79 and 16·9 per cent. in 1992-93.

Mr. Williams: Will the Minister comment on figures that were quoted in the May 1993 issue of *Economic Trends*? Those figures showed that as household disposable income decreases the proportion paid in VAT increases and that although the top 10 per cent. of the population pay 6·1 per cent. of their net income in value added tax, the bottom 10 per cent. pay 11·5 per cent. of their income. Does not that mean that any increase in VAT will hit the poor twice as hard as it hits the rich?

Sir John Cope: No, it does not necessarily mean that. It depends how it is done and what is done. In any case, it is well known that the Government's policy has been to shift some of the weight of taxation from direct to indirect taxation, and the hon. Gentlemen has enabled me to demonstrate how we have been doing that.

Sir Michael Neubert: What estimate does my right hon. Friend make of the VAT that is lost as a result of builders operating legally, and in a significant number of cases illegally, under the VAT exempt ceilling and, worse, those in the black economy evading tax altogether? In view of the critical need to reduce the current deficit, what action will he take to recover that revenue and restore fair competition to the building industry?

Sir John Cope: There has always been some argument about where we should fix the bottom level of VAT for that purpose—the turnover level. Those immediately above it tend to argue that it should be increased; those who feel that it would not be increased sufficiently to include them would, on the whole, like it moved further down to ensure that the smallest firms and one-man businesses are within the net. We try to reach a balanced judgment between those two pressures to fix the bottom level of VAT so that there is not too much burden either on the Customs and Excise in collecting it or on industry in filling in the forms. However, at the same time, we collect as much VAT as possible.

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Q1. **Mr. Roger Evans:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister (Mr. John Major): This morning, I presided at a meeting of the Cabinet and had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in the House, I shall be having further meetings later today.

Mr. Evans: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the appropriate conditions and criteria for adoption policy should be common sense and the interests of children, not the curse of politically correct thinking? Will my right hon. Friend join me in congratulating the Secretary of State for Health on her statement yesterday that makes a clear preference in adoption policy for married couples?

The Prime Minister: I am certainly happy to congratulate my right hon. Friend on her statement yesterday. I agree with what my hon. Friend has to say about the importance of common sense in adoption policy. There is no place for ideology in adoption; it is not about social engineering but about providing loving homes for children in need.

Mr. John Smith: Can the Prime Minister tell us whether, following the discussions in Belfast yesterday and the reported comments by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, there is unlikely to be an early resumption of all-party talks among the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland? After the tragic events of recent days, is not there an inescapable moral obligation on all the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland to co-operate in a new dialogue without hesitation or reservation, and for the Government to make that point clearly and firmly to them all?

The Prime Minister: I very much hope that it will be possible for the talks to resume, and I shall be meeting the leaders of all the constitutional parties over the next few days. My right hon. and learned Friend and I certainly hope to resume those talks as speedily as possible.

Mr. John Smith: While I appreciate the importance that was rightly attached to dialogue between the Governments and to a proper response to the initiative taken by the Irish Government recently, will the Prime Minister assure the House that he will take the lead at the earliest opportunity to call together the constitutional parties so that what might be a window of opportunity is not lost?

The Prime Minister: As I said to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, I am seeing the leaders of the parties individually in the hope that we can map out a suitable ground so that the talks can resume. I very much hope that that will be possible. However, I do not want an artificially staged event where the talks are called together with no probability of making progress. In my private discussions with the leaders of the constitutional parties, I hope that we can find a way through that will enable talks to resume with a practical chance of proper progress.

Q2. **Mr. Nigel Evans:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Evans: Did my right hon. Friend see an article on social security fraud in the *Daily Express* last week, which estimated social security fraud to be somewhere in the region of £5 billion? It mentioned multiple applications using false identities, phantom children and minicab moonlighting. Will my right hon. Friend give an assurance to the House today that he will take whatever action is necessary to stamp out social security fraud, including the use of ID cards for claimants?

The Prime Minister: Like my hon. Friend, I am attracted to the principle of identity cards to combat social security fraud. Of course, there are some practical and serious issues that need to be resolved, but I assure my hon. Friend that we are examining the matter extremely carefully. We will certainly keep up the pressure on social security fraud. We refer to it as fraud, but in practice it is theft from the taxpayer.

Mr. Ashdown: The Prime Minister has a justified reputation for his skill as a negotiator—*[Interruption.]* Does he realise—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. A number of hon. Members are hoping to be called and such interruptions are very time consuming.

Mr. Ashdown: Does the right hon. Gentleman realise how important it is that he should take personal charge of Britain's efforts to achieve peace in Northern Ireland? In the light of his remarks a moment ago, is that what he has decided to do?

The Prime Minister: I am certainly taking a very direct interest, together with my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in the possibility of moving towards a proper peace in Northern Ireland. By that, I do not just mean a temporary ceasefire. What the people of Northern Ireland need and deserve is a permanent end to the hostilities and movement towards a proper constitutional structure for local government within Northern Ireland. On the question of negotiation, that is rather like poker—it is best to keep one's hand to oneself for as long as possible.

Q3. **Mr. Milligan:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Milligan: Does my right hon. Friend agree that it is hardly surprising that football hooliganism is so prevalent in this country when Labour Members provide the role model that they did during last night's debate? They used lavatorial antics to divert attention away from some of the real issues that should have been debated—in particular, the future of the railway pension fund.

Will my right hon. Friend repeat the assurance that railway pensioners will continue to enjoy precisely the same benefits as they have hitherto and that on the one outstanding issue the Government will continue to seek the agreement of the railway trustees and report back to this House before orders introducing the new pension fund are laid?

The Prime Minister: There were some unusual scenes last night, but perhaps it is best not to dwell on them—not least because I wish to spare the embarrassment of the Opposition Chief Whip and his colleagues.

On my hon. Friend's substantive point, the Government remain committed to protecting the security of the pension rights of existing, deferred and future British Rail pensioners affected by our privatisation proposals. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport has made that clear on innumerable occasions and I am happy to make it clear yet again this afternoon.

Mr. Mallon: Will the Prime Minister confirm that the objective of his talks with the Irish Prime Minister, Mr. Reynolds, is to facilitate an agreement among the divided people of Ireland that can command the respect of each sector of that diversity and command the support of everyone within the island of Ireland?

The Prime Minister: The Taoiseach and I have made clear our view of the direction in which the talks need to go and what needs to be achieved. It is helpful that the principle of consent has now been acknowledged for Northern Ireland. That is vital if progress is to be made. It is a noticeable advance—as, indeed, was the speech of the Tanaiste last week.

Q4. **Mr. Duncan:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Duncan: Does my right hon. Friend agree that political correctness, so called, has become a pernicious exercise in social engineering that undermines traditional decencies and codes of conduct? Can he confirm that we are the party of "Mrs", "Miss" and "Chairman" and that we will have nothing to do with anyone who describes himself as "Chairperson", "Chairholder" or "Chair"?

The Prime Minister: In the House we have a Madam Speaker. I believe that that is right.

Mr. Canavan: Is it true that the Government are now considering another U-turn and introducing a Bill to abolish the House of Lords?

The Prime Minister: No.

Q5. **Mr. John Greenway:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Greenway: Does my hon. Friend agree that in the 10 years since British Telecom became a private company, it has become more efficient, offers greatly improved services and now, under the pressure of competition, is reducing its prices? Is not it a fact that that has been achieved because of privatisation? Does my right hon. Friend share my hope that one day those who opposed the privatisation will admit that they were wrong?

The Prime Minister: I live in hope, but perhaps not quite as much hope as that. There is no doubt that privatisation has produced better services from BT—prices have fallen dramatically, there are more payphones, in better condition and more speedily repaired when vandalised, and installations are carried out more efficiently. With the solitary exception of the Labour party, everyone recognises the improvements brought about by privatisation. Perhaps that is a little unfair to the Labour party; I neglected to mention that the Liberal Democrats are another exception.

Q6. **Mrs. Adams:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mrs. Adams: Does the Prime Minister recall that the last time I asked him a question in Parliament, I asked him to give a guarantee that he would not increase value added tax? The Prime Minister gave me his word that he would not. He has since broken his promise and increased VAT by putting it on domestic fuel, which will undoubtedly cause great hardship to many pensioners and ordinary families. Why did the Prime Minister give me, and the country, his word and then not keep it?

The Prime Minister: From the innumerable times that this question has been answered, the hon. Lady knows that we will protect people who are vulnerable. She would be well advised to wait until she hears what those protection measures will be.

Q7. **Mr. Harry Greenway:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Greenway: Does my right hon. Friend remember the unlamented Greater London council, with its very high taxation on Londoners and its massive and damaging bureaucracy? Has he heard the calls for higher taxation for Londoners, on cinema seats, on videos, on tourists, on businesses, on jobs and on much else? Is he aware that calls for a mark 2 Greater London council, and a large number of taxes in a wide range of areas, are now being made by the ever-loony Labour party?

The Prime Minister: Over the last few weeks the hon. Member for Dunfermline, East (Mr. Brown), on a national level, has moved the Labour party's position from no more taxes, to some more taxes, to lots more taxes. It is hardly surprising that in London the Labour party wants more

layers of bureaucracy; it also wants it in the regions, in Scotland and in Wales. It is not the way to produce efficient government, but it is their policy.

Q8. **Mr. Tyler:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Tyler: Does the Prime Minister recall visiting north Cornwall exactly nine months ago to the day and promising my constituents that he would take action to halt the inexorable rise in water and sewage charges—not this year or next year but as soon as he possibly could, and certainly not at the end of the century? How does the right hon. Gentleman reconcile that undertaking with the United Kingdom's £500 million contribution to the EC cohesion fund, which will be used to clean up the water and sewage problems of Portugal, Greece and Spain?

The Prime Minister: I begin to suspect that it must be 1 April. The hon. Gentleman should remember his party's remarks about the cohesion fund at the time that we debated the matter and the moral support that it gave the richer nations of Europe in providing a cohesion fund for the smaller nations. This is yet another example of the Liberals saying one thing in one place and something else in another.

Q9. **Mr. Sykes:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Sykes: Will my right hon. Friend join me in congratulating my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary on his announcement yesterday about sending squatters to gaol if they do not leave the premises in question within a specified time limit?

The Prime Minister: My right hon. and learned Friend has set out some proposals to deal with that problem, which has been a frustration for many people for far too long. Some time ago, we indicated that we would take firm action to deal with the problem. My right hon. and learned Friend has now set out our proposals.

Mr. Barron: Will the Prime Minister explain to the House and to the country how his Government got into a shambolic mess yesterday over the railways privatisation Bill? Despite those events, next week and the week after five sitting days will not be used.

The Prime Minister: I do not know where the hon. Gentleman was last night, but clearly he was not in the real world, in here. The leader of the Labour party speaks fine words about the need to improve standards in public life, but he let some of his colleagues below the Gangway behave in a way that disgraced Parliament.

Regional and Urban Policy

3.30 pm

The Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. John Selwyn Gummer): It is widely agreed that there is considerable scope locally to bring Government programmes and Departments together. They should be more responsive to local needs and acceptable to local people. We acknowledged that in our manifesto. Today, I am announcing changes to bring that about through a new single budget and new integrated regional offices in England. This signals an important shift from the centre to the localities.

I am making this announcement on behalf of my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Transport, the Secretary of State for Education and the President of the Board of Trade, and my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

From April next year, we are establishing a new single budget for regeneration and development. It will combine 20 separate programmes worth, on current plans, some £1·4 billion. Continuing commitments under those programmes will be met.

We intend to consult widely about how the budget will work in each locality and how bidding arrangements will operate, but in most cases we expect that bids will come from partnerships within the local community and that local authorities and training and enterprise councils will take the lead in assembling partnerships and putting forward bids. However, we want to encourage local innovation and imagination, so there is no intention of excluding other bodies from promoting bids.

The budget will mean that priorities are set locally in the light of local needs, not in Whitehall. It will give local authorities, businesses and local communities real influence over spending priorities. The budget will help to mobilise public-sector money and will complement the provision of business support services. It will support measures to improve education and training, tackle crime, meet ethnic minority needs and improve rundown housing. Those measures will be combined in a comprehensive way to meet local needs.

I shall be accountable to Parliament for the budget. I and colleagues will sit on a new ministerial committee for regeneration which will oversee the budget. At the same time as introducing the budget, we shall bring together the existing regional offices of the Department of Transport, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Employment and the Department of the Environment.

We will therefore meet the widespread demand that there should be a single point of contact for local authorities, businesses and local communities. That will provide a better service without increasing the power or cost of central Government one iota. In fact, there should be some room for savings in overhead costs.

The new integrated offices will administer the single budget and will be responsible for the other departmental programmes that, at present, are operated by individual regional offices. Ministerial responsibility to Parliament for programmes not in the single budget will be unchanged.

Each office will be headed by a senior regional director, who will be accountable to the relevant Secretary of State for programmes carried out by his office, and to me for the single budget.

With the new offices, the Government's response to the needs of localities will be better informed. The various elements—housing, training, business support and transport—will be considered together, and local priorities emphasised in the advice that is given to Ministers. Local needs, rather than departmental interests, will be the prime consideration.

As the hon. Member for Blackburn (Mr. Straw) has now heard me talk about the new budget and offices, he will be less inclined to accuse me of a sinister act of centralisation. He will see that we are devolving responsibility from Whitehall. We are cutting back red tape and bureaucracy. We are making it easier for local people, business men, local authorities and training and enterprise councils to talk to Government.

Training and enterprise councils will be key private-sector partners with the new offices for the full range of regeneration and economic development activities in their localities. To help with that, a team of sponsor Ministers will continue their links with our major cities and other areas. They will support regeneration initiatives, advise the new offices and raise local issues in Whitehall. I have placed a copy of the revised list of sponsor Ministers in the Library.

I am issuing a challenge to the civic and business leaders of our three greatest cities of international standing —London, Birmingham and Manchester.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): What about Bradford?

Mr. Gummer: They were chosen simply because they happen to be the largest cities in England.

I want the civic and business leaders to get together with their private and public-sector partners to define their vision and to set up what practical steps can be taken to build on the strengths of their areas and on the things that they believe most command their areas.

This is not some arid planning exercise or an open invitation to bid for more resources. Central and local government, as well as the private sector, will continue to spend large sums of money in the cities.

City pride is about making the most of the investment and providing a lasting foundation for growth. I am sure that London, Birmingham and Manchester will rise to the challenge. We will concentrate first on those cities to pilot city pride, but if other cities want to adopt the approach, I would not want to dissuade them.

We have already achieved great successes. Initiatives such as city challenge and my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade's new business link scheme have shown what can be accomplished when local authorities, businesses, local communities and voluntary groups work together. I am pleased to see that, at least in one respect, the Labour party's plan for London underlines the fact that it has taken over some of the Government's belief in partnerships. The TECs have brought about the most significant partnership between Government and industry for decades.

The single budget and integrated regional offices will make Government more accessible and responsive. We shall be altering the balance from the centre to the localities. That will give new opportunities for partnerships to create prosperity and to build on local strengths.

Mr. Jack Straw (Blackburn): We welcome any measures that improve the relationship between central and local government. We, and Labour local councils, will strive hard to ensure that these arrangements work.

But the Secretary of State must surely understand that after 14 years—during which 144 separate Acts of Parliament have removed one power after another and have taken control of £24 billion of public spending from democratic local government to unaccountable quangos and Government offices and during which time Government have taken control of every council budget—councils and the communities who elect them are right to be highly sceptical about the Government's motives.

In his press statement, the Secretary of State said that these were

"sweeping measures to shift power from Whitehall to local communities."

If that is, at long last, an admission by the Secretary of State that he and his colleagues have, over the past 14 years, centralised on a scale unknown in western Europe, we shall be the first to cheer. However, does the Secretary of State not understand that, if his words are to have any meaning, universal budget capping must be removed, the right of councils to spend their £5,000 million of capital receipts—their money, but locked in a bank by Government order—must be reinstated, and the vast and growing network of quangos packed with Tory placemen, and the odd Tory placewoman, has to be dismantled? Is it not true that the Secretary of State's announcement highlights the democratic deficit that is undermining the whole of our political system?

Does the Secretary of State agree with the following words from a pamphlet published several years ago, dealing with the case for elected regional government:

"The decision makers who are handling . . . regional problems . . . are not answerable to any elected representatives . . . A democracy is not healthy if large geographical areas or important sections of opinion feel that the Government is remote or not open to question"?

The writer suggested that the answer was "elected regional authorities". Would the Secretary of State like to know that those words were written by the then secretary of the Birmingham Bow Group and prospective Conservative candidate for Rushcliffe, now the Chancellor of the Exchequer? He wrote them in a fine pamphlet; his advice then was right, but his current view is wrong.

At the Conservative party conference last month, the Secretary of State said that he would

"consult Londoners on what they want for their city".

Is he therefore going to listen to the compelling evidence published today which shows that four out of five Londoners want an elected strategic authority for their city?

On the new budget arrangements, the Secretary of State had some carefully crafted words about the cash available. He said that the programmes were

"worth on current plans some £1·4 billion. Continuing commitments under these programmes will be met".

What is the value of those "continuing commitments"? Is it less than the £1·4 billion to which his statement refers? Do "current plans" mean those published last autumn or those that will be announced on 30 November? Can he give any guarantee that the current plans for 1994-95 will not be cut in the Budget? For example, is the £813 million, which was earmarked for the inner cities next year in this year's annual report from the Department of the Environment, to be maintained as part of the overall budget?

Does the Secretary of State recognise that city pride and the new regeneration budget announced today are the 22nd repackaging of inner-city and urban aid programmes, from urban capital partnerships to city action teams, enterprise zones, urban programme schemes and long-forgotten business breakfasts? Does he accept that, as the packages get ever glossier, the money gets ever smaller? Bitter experience has taught us that what starts as fanfare always end as thin fare. [HON. MEMBERS: "Oh."] It is true.

Will the Secretary of State confirm that housing investment, already down from £8 billion in 1979 to £3·5 billion this year, has been cut again and that councils will be forced to shed thousands more jobs as a consequence of the Secretary of State's reported surrender to the Chief Secretary in the latest spending round? Does he not recognise that the effectiveness of the Government's urban and regional policy will be judged not by today's announcement but by whether, at long last, the Government are to back their rhetoric by giving the necessary resources and powers to councils so that they can create a better quality of life for the communities they serve?

Mr. Gummer: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his earliest words, which were more supportive than anything I have heard him say on radio or television. However, he then went on to say much of what he said on radio and television, so I have checked up on some of his comments.

I was interested to hear the hon. Gentleman refer to quangos, because he announced today the creation of the Thames Park authority, a new accountable police authority, a strategic health authority, a cultural education commission, a London film commission, a new development agency, a royal docks agency and a register of private landlords. He did all that today. The hon. Gentleman cannot teach anyone about concern for quangos.

What I have announced today is not a new body. It brings together the civil servants who already provide Government services in the regions so that they can provide those services more effectively and so that they can be influenced more directly by the borough councils, county councils and district councils. They are brought together in such a way that they can make decisions about the priorities locally, instead of being forced to keep the budget apart as a result of decisions that are taken centrally.

When the Labour party was in power so long ago, it had exactly the same problem, but it did nothing about it. Labour accepted that departmental divisions were more important than local needs. We are insisting that local needs come first, and that is what the proposal will achieve.

The other change is a matter of considerable importance. Those who bid for help with projects for which they have enthusiastic support will no longer have to ensure that their projects fit the various departmental programmes. They can present their projects, and if they fit the needs of the area, they will receive the support, irrespective of the programme from which it comes. That makes a considerable difference.

The hon. Member for Blackburn (Mr. Straw) asked a question about regional government. I have not had the pleasure of reading the early contribution to this debate by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke). However, I have had the pleasure

[Mr. Gummer]

of talking to him about the matter. His view is very clear. He wants a lively local government system which is close to the people who pay for it and vote for it.

My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe does not want—and nor do I—regional government, which is an entirely fictitious concept, to cover the overweening devolution plans of the Labour party and to excuse the problem of what has properly been called the "Dalyell" difficulty. In the latter case, people vote in Scotland for their own projects and then come to the imperial Paliament, as it was once called, and make decisions on behalf of other people who have no say in those decisions. That is what the Labour party is trying to cover up. Anyone who lives in East Anglia and believes that there is a connection between Norfolk and Thurrock has not lived in any part of that area.

The hon. Gentleman referred to my "carefully crafted" words. They were carefully crafted and, if I may say so, they were better crafted than the last joke that we heard from the hon. Member for Blackburn. They were carefully crafted to say that this is a decision about improving the way in which we provide services. Even if I receive more money next year, less money next year or the same amount, it will be important to provide the best value for the money that I receive. The problem with the Labour party is that it prefers to have twice as much money half as well spent. Labour would consider that a victory.

Labour does not understand that we need to achieve 100p value for every £1 that we spend. That would be true if we had twice as much to spend, half as much to spend or any amount of money to spend. The money would be better spent.

Finally—*[Interruption.]* I think that you will agree, Madam Speaker, that the hon. Member for Blackburn asked many questions. With regard to his last question, I promise to consult Londoners on the 22nd of this month. There will be a major consultation exercise which will be open to all Londoners so that they can identify their priorities and say what they are proud about in London. They will be able to say what they would like to see changed. We will take that into account as we will listen to Londoners, instead of inventing a series of new taxes for Londoners, which is what the hon. Member for Blackburn would provide.

Sir Peter Emery (Honiton): Does my right hon. Friend accept that any policy designed for rejuvenation, as he has outlined in his statement, should be welcomed on both sides of the House? The emphasis on local needs, paying particular attention to local views and local government, is also something that most of us would wish to welcome.

However, can my right hon. Friend deny that the regional office for the south-west will be in Bristol? Does he think it sensible that half of London should be a region controlled by Bristol? If he wishes to have the regional headquarters in Bristol, a third of the south-west is further away from Bristol than London is. If he is to emphasise the local side, he must come down to a regional centre——

Mr. David Harris (St. Ives): In Cornwall.

Sir Peter Emery: Even Cornwall would be acceptable, but perhaps Plymouth or Exeter would be more appropriate for the south-west. Without such a regional centre, my right hon. Friend's views on that aspect of local government will not ring quite as true in the south-west as we would want them to.

Mr. Gummer: I thank my right hon. Friend for his general comments. At the moment, the majority of the regional offices are in Bristol. It is my intention to keep them there in the integrated regional office. The offices that currently exist in Plymouth and Penzance will remain there. It is not a question of taking away those offices; there is no question of that. But I acknowledge the problem of the south-west, which is the difficulty of finding the right centre. My hon. Friend will remember that, when I was Minister of Agriculture, I spent considerable time trying to get that right, and I retained—with great difficulty—the office in Cornwall to ensure that we were properly represented. When I assure my right hon. Friend that I shall be happy to see whether there is a better answer, he will understand that I mean that, and that they are not merely words.

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): After 14 years and a manifesto commitment, some co-ordinated regional urban policy is better than none. But are not six locally linked Whitehall Departments no substitute for one democratic town hall with adequate finance? Is not the reality that, sadly, this—apart from the sting of the "Tale of Three Cities" at the end, which is rather selective and unfair to all the cities in the country—is a tale told by no democratic Minister, with Government Departments still full of civil servants, above all, signifying no more democracy, no more money and local people having no more ability to choose their local priorities through locally accountable democratic representatives?

Mr. Gummer: The hon. Gentleman misses the point altogether. These are Whitehall offices that have been there even since the long time ago that his party was in office. *[Interruption.]* Some of them have been here as long as that. It may have been when horses and carts were used, but the offices were there.

The hon. Gentleman must remember that, even with such a preposterous concept of regional government, national policies would have to be delivered. Surely one does that better by co-ordinating them more sensibly, and by having more influence from the locally elected people, as well as local business and local voluntary organisations. That is why this has been widely welcomed by local authorities not in the hands of the Conservative party.

Sir Anthony Durant (Reading, West): Is my right hon. Friend aware that his regional office for the Berkshire area is also in Bristol? There is also a good Department of Trade and Industry office in Reading. Will he consider moving one of his offices to Reading and amalgamating a number of offices there?

Mr. Gummer: My hon. Friend is right. There is a DTI area office in Reading. There are offices in a number of other towns. We shall seek by consultation to find the place most accessible to the largest number of people, particularly to the local authorities, business interests and the voluntary bodies.

Mr. Gerald Kaufman (Manchester, Gorton): My constituents in inner-city Manchester will welcome any action that improves their lot. However, when the

Secretary of State says that local needs come first, has he any idea of the needs of my constituents, many thousands of whom live in deep poverty? They suffer such unemployment that, in parts of my constituency, there is male unemployment of 32 per cent. The right hon. Gentleman talks about existing programmes, but what benefits will my constituents gain from the urban programme which buoyed them up under a Labour Government?

The right hon. Gentleman says that his plans are designed to meet ethnic needs. I represent a large number of people from ethnic minorities and want to know how the right hon. Gentleman can claim to meet ethnic needs when, at the same time, the Government are massacring section 11 funding, about which my constituents write to me all the time. My constituents live in deep poverty; what assurance can the right hon. Gentleman give me that his plans will be more than a shiny veneer on top of the deprivation in which thousands of people live in inner-city Manchester?

Mr. Gummer: I assure the right hon. Gentleman that I understand many of the problems of Manchester, as I have visited it often and spent much time talking to the Labour leader of Manchester city council, which covers part of the area more colloquially called Manchester—beyond which are many other districts of equal need. The plan is designed to bring the programmes together and make it easier to focus the response to meet the specific needs of Manchester. The right hon. Gentleman will probably find that the problems of the ethnic minorities in Manchester may lead to a greater proportion of the budget being used on that sector; there may be other districts where the need is not so great.

The right hon. Gentleman—I say this with care—should reflect that the Government have put great resources into inner cities, and their efforts dwarf some of the poor efforts made by him and his right hon. and hon. Friends when they were in power. It would be more responsible of the right hon. Gentleman to acknowledge what we have done, even if he wants to ask for more.

Mr. Richard Tracey (Surbiton): We will need time to digest my right hon. Friend's statement in full. It is pleasing to hear him say that there will be full consultation on future progress. Does he agree that, particularly in London, the greatest priority within the consultation should be given to the 32 London boroughs? The London unitary authorities are the model of local government and unitary authorities in the rest of the country. Will he take the opportunity this afternoon to say that there is absolutely no chance of returning to a single London authority, which would be—as it was before—disastrous?

Mr. Gummer: The London boroughs are a very proper way of democratically representing the people of London. There is no need for an over-arching authority in London. The reason for that is simple: London is a collection of different communities that are gathered together in different groups for different purposes. When we talk about the Thames, we must talk about the communities that stretch far beyond the Greater London area; otherwise we would not be dealing effectively with the Thames. If we want to talk about the problems of London theatres, we need deal only with that part of London that lies in part of the London boroughs of Camden and Westminster and a bit of the borough of Lambeth. The variable geography of London means that it is better to deal with it in that way.

I hope that my hon. Friend has read the reported statements of the Labour party. If he has, he will see that not only does it propose that we should have an over-arching body, but it dictates—there is no choice—that half of the democratically elected people should be men and half should be women. It also proposes handing back independent grant-maintained schools to the educational expertise of Lambeth, Southwark, Camden, and Hammersmith and Fulham. Is that giving people a decently run education system?

Mr. George Mudie (Leeds, East): Will the Secretary of State confirm that the £1·4 billion that he has mentioned contains no new money? Will he state whether that means that section 11 funding will be restarted after it was disgracefully stopped during this financial year?

The Secretary of State said that he has chosen the three cities on the grounds of size. Will he have another look at that, and look at the great city of Leeds? Outside London, Leeds is geographically the biggest city in the country and, outside Birmingham, is the second largest in population. If size is the criterion, will the right hon. Gentleman look again, because he seems to have left out the great city of Leeds by error?

Mr. Gummer: I had the pleasure of living in Leeds for some years, and I am an enthusiastic supporter of the city. If Leeds feels that it would like to apply itself to the scheme, I would not discourage it. I had to find some way of choosing the three cities for the pilot scheme, but if Leeds comes to me about the scheme I should be happy to look at it.

The hon. Gentleman referred to money, and I say to him that it is about the delivery of service. I will confirm that the amount of money that is available for next year's programmes is £1·4 billion. The hon. Gentleman also referred to section 11 grants. The new system will enable people locally to have real influence on the decisions about whether a larger proportion of the budget might be spent on section 11 purposes.

Mr. Roy Thomason (Bromsgrove): Will my right hon. Friend confirm that local government has for a long time complained about the opacity of present regional arrangements, and should therefore welcome most strongly the proposals announced today? Will he also confirm that it should support the concept of one office, one contact point and one set of priorities, and should welcome the opportunities for greater accountability which the new arrangements will create? That is unlike the Opposition, who seem to dislike all forms of accountability. Will my right hon. Friend also confirm that the arrangements for all the Departments will now been on a conterminous boundary?

Mr. Gummer: For the first time, there will be conterminous regions for the Departments, and that is a vital change. It has always seemed ridiculous to me that different Departments had different regions. That made any sort of planning almost impossible.

I am sure that the House will agree with the words of the hon. Member for Leicester, East (Mr. Vaz) who said that co-ordination between Departments on urban policy is an idea "whose time has surely come". I am sad that the hon. Gentleman has not carried that information to the hon. Member for Blackburn. There is much in the announcement which has been asked for by politicians from all

[Mr. Gummer]

parties. It is a pity that, apart from a slim sentence at the beginning of his speech, the hon. Member for Blackburn could not say that it was a good idea, although the Opposition might have liked it to go further. If he had said that it was a good idea and that the Opposition supported it, I am sure that the public would have believed him much more.

Mr. Robin Corbett (Birmingham, Erdington): I know that the Secretary of State has just come off the farm. May I tell him that the city of Birmingham has long and deep experience of the council, the private sector, the chamber of commerce and industry working close together to deliver the national exhibition centre, and, more recently, the magnificent international convention centre and national indoor arena?

How will the Secretary of State match his claim that the changes will better recognise local needs and aspirations, when, in fact, the process remains a lottery? Will not one community be bidding against another, and one city or town bidding against the rest?

Mr. Gummer: I am surprised that the hon. Gentleman should say that, because those were not terms used by either the Labour leader of Birmingham or, indeed, her Conservative opponent; they have welcomed the proposals. The hon. Gentleman will find that there is widespread support for what we are doing, and I do not think that he helps his case by making general comments about one's bucolic past.

I want the better delivery of Government services to the people of Britain, much closer to their localities. I want local authorities, business communities and voluntary bodies to be able to influence decisions more effectively; and I want those decisions made on the basis of need, not departmental desire.

Mr. Hartley Booth (Finchley): I hope that the Secretary of State realises that there will be a wide welcome for his proposals, not least because they will be seen not to add another tier of government. Moreover, they will not conflict with local government. Some years ago, I came to this place wearing another hat as chairman of the British Urban Regeneration Association, so I know that these proposals deal with a persistent problem. There was always a conflict between Departments in local areas when we were attempting urban regeneration.

I hope that my right hon. Friend also realises that the proposals will be welcomed because, in many areas, not least crime prevention, Government Departments need to get their act together. Finally, they will be welcomed because, unlike the Labour party's nanny state vocabulary describing strategies of the past and proposing new taxes, the Government propose none of that. The proposals achieve what they are meant to achieve without taxes or the nanny state.

Mr. Gummer: I thank my hon. Friend. This is, indeed, the sort of answer that the Audit Commission, the Association of District Councils, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities and other organisations had sought, and I am sure that it is widely accepted. It is right not to impose another tier of government or more taxes. We understand today that the Labour party would be liable to produce, if it were ever elected, a tourism tax, an entertainment tax, a television tax, an airport tax and a robust and diverse group of new taxes on Londoners. On such a day, the public will once again be pleased to know that they have a Conservative Government.

Mr. Peter Shore (Bethnal Green and Stepney): The Minister will know something of the problems of the borough of Tower Hamlets. He will know that, in recent weeks, those problems have been enormously compounded by outbreaks of racial violence and by the election of the first British National party candidate to a council anywhere in Britain, in the ward of Millwall. The Minister will also know that these events reflect, perhaps more than anything else, the chronic shortage of social goods in the borough of Tower Hamlets.

Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the crisis in the provision of housing is such that adequate resources should come from his Department? What do these new proposals do to increase the supply of housing at rents that people can afford in Tower Hamlets, which is desperately short of housing and where competition for available housing leads to serious racial dispute and disturbance?

Some of my colleagues have already mentioned section 11 funding. Tower Hamlets is the largest recipient of such funding in the country, because we have a large Bengali population. Section 11 funding, however, is to be cut by one third over the next two years. How can the Minister tell the House that he is doing something about inner cities when he and his predecessors have let them rot?

Mr. Gummer: I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman should finish his question in that way, because I have been to the very estate where that disgraceful election took place. I noted that the estate which elected the person in question was one in which we are in the course of spending £25 million. I noticed, too, in that same area an entirely new housing estate of high-quality homes for people on low incomes. It has just been completed, and it was the selection of people to go into those homes which caused some of the problems.

I noticed at the same time that the London borough of Tower Hamlets has a housing action trust. I noticed that city challenge in the area has been especially focused on Bengalis. So we are doing a whole series of things, and the right hon. Gentleman might have started by saying how pleased he was about that. He might like more, but there is no doubt that we are doing a focused job. It will be easier in the future, with the integrated London office, to ensure that the programmes dealing with Tower Hamlets and its special problems will be more open to pressure of the local authority and more able to meet local needs in the way in which local people want.

I remind the right hon. Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore) that, until recently, Tower Hamlets had an uninterrupted history of Labour government, so Labour must accept the very highest fault for the situation that now exists in the London borough of Tower Hamlets. It is no good the right hon. Gentleman blaming this Government when he has served in Governments for many years and, as a Labour Member, has represented an area for which he has not done the best.

Mr. Andrew Rowe (Mid-Kent): My right hon. Friend will know well that, to local people, one of the most incomprehensible features is the way in which large Government projects can be dreamed up and planned with apparently no concept that they will lay enormous costs on

the roads programme to serve those projects, especially potential railway stations for example. His announcement is encouraging because in future we may find civil servants in the regions taking into account the total effect on the region's budget, rather than taking the disparate approaches that we have suffered hither to.

Mr. Gummer: That is our purpose.

Mr. Doug Henderson (Newcastle upon Tyne, North): Will the Secretary of State accept that, on the day that he has announced his plans for London and other parts of the country, it is a mark of defensiveness that he refers in disparaging terms to a draft Labour party document, which was rejected by the policy committee of the Labour party six weeks ago—as he knows? In relation to his own document, will he accept that no amount of reshuffling of desks in Plymouth, in Exeter, in Bristol or in my region, in Newcastle, Durham or Middlesbrough, can compensate other parts of the country for any reduction in resources? Will he accept that many hon. Members on both sides of the House are sceptical of his comment that £1·4 billion is available at the moment? Many believe that that £1·4 billion could be £1·3 billion or £1·2 billion or £1·1 billion by 30 November. Will he give a firm guarantee to the House that that £1·4 billion will be available for economic regeneration on 30 November?

Mr. Gummer: It is a remarkable moment when one discovers that the Labour party's plans for London got such a bad press in half a day that they were withdrawn immediately. That is the kind of U-turn that we have not known before—the U before the turn. The hon. Gentleman admits that, after two years, the Labour party produced a plan for London that was so bad that it was thrown out by the Labour party. I hope that the House will recognise how little it has to offer local government. However much more money I have or however much less money I have, it is much better to get 100p in the pound value than not to get full value for money. Why cannot the Labour party accept that now? Why will it never accept good news? Why does it always want to make people miserable?

"Competing for Quality"

4.14 pm

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. William Waldegrave): With permission, Madam Speaker, I should like to make a statement about the progress of the Government's competing for quality programme.

As the House will know, the aim of this initiative is to introduce competition into the provision of public services. We are asking central Government to operate under disciplines that the private sector has long taken for granted, and which local authorities, through compulsory competitive tendering, have been handling successfully for many years.

For a number of years, there has been a small central Government market testing programme, amounting to little more than £20 million a year. Two years ago, in the White Paper "Competing for Quality", we announced our intention of turning this small programme into something much larger. We wanted a step change in the amount of work that was market-tested. I can now announce that we have achieved that goal. I shall outline the progress that we have made, the savings that have been produced, and the action that we intend to take to increase the scope of market testing over the coming year.

The House may recall that, in the "Citizen's Charter First Report", published last November, the Government set themselves the target of reviewing activities worth about £1·5 billion and involving more than 44,000 staff, over the 18-month period from 1 April 1992 to 30 September this year. Those activities have now been intensively examined to see how value for money can best be improved.

In some instances, we took a strategic view that, in future, the work in question should be done by the private and not the public sector. In others, we found that the work no longer needed to be done at all. In several cases, we found ways of increasing in-house efficiency without going out to tender. In a host of others, services have now been successfully market tested, with the public and private sectors competing for the work.

I can report to the House that just under £1 billion-worth of this programme is now complete or nearing completion. Specifically, provisional figures show that by the end of September, just under £700 million worth had been achieved. Worth to the value of a further £250 million, approximately, will be achieved shortly, representing tenders involving the Inland Revenue's information technology services. A decision on those will be taken soon. A number of other decisions that were initiated in this first tranche will also be taken in the coming weeks.

As I have said, this £1 billion programme contrasts with the previous annual programme of about £20 million. That represents a remarkable achievement by the market testing units in Departments and the efficiency unit in my Department.

The increase in the size of the market testing programme as such is not the most important matter. What really matters is the scale of the gains in value for money that have been achieved for the taxpayers and users of services. I am delighted to be able to tell the House that, in relation to the £700 million of work completed by the end

[Mr. William Waldegrave]

of September, the "competing for quality" programme has already saved approximately £100 million. Not only that, but this benefit will recur year after year.

These savings should be welcome to the House because at the same time Departments are reporting that standards and quality are being maintained or improved. That is what market testing is all about. The House will be interested to learn that in the first year, where in-house teams competed, they won about 57 per cent. by value. That is a clear indication that Departments are giving proper consideration to the merits of both external and in-house teams.

I should like to make it clear that some of the very highest quality and most innovative winning bids have come from in-house teams, and I pay tribute to those who have won competitions from inside. None the less, in other cases private sector bids have offered the best quality and value for money. Either way, it is a very great gain that we will now have confidence that the best provider, private or public, will be doing the work.

I turn now to the Government's programme for the next 12 months starting on 1 October. Departments' plans are again ambitious. In addition to any work that is necessary to complete their 1992-93 programmes, they will be looking to market-test work currently worth a total of £800 million, and covering more than 35,000 civil servants.

In staff terms, this 12-month target will be more challenging than the 18-month programme that I have just described. I am confident, however, that further good progress will be made. A Department-by-Department breakdown of these figures has been placed in the Library, together with a copy of the new monthly "Market Testing Bulletin", which was published for the first time today.

I have announced the progress that we have made with market testing, the savings produced, and the scale of our 1993-94 programme. I should also inform the House of the Government's intention of introducing legislation, when a suitable opportunity arises, to remove some of the statutory obstacles to market testing in both central and local government.

As hon. Members may be aware, some statutes are framed so that activities have to be carried out by a Minister. The principle that such activities can be carried out by civil servants on a Minister's behalf is well established. We now propose a common-sense extension of that principle to allow contractors as well as civil servants to carry out such work in appropriate cases.

The aim of our "competing for quality" initiative is simple. It is to ensure that public services are provided in an efficient and cost-effective way. It is an integral part of the citizen's charter: it is improving the quality of our public services. It is improving value for money on behalf of the taxpayer, and it is a policy that other countries are keen to adopt. Market testing is here, and it is working. I hope that all hon. Members will give it their support.

Mr. Michael Meacher (Oldham, West): Will the right hon. Gentleman confirm that his statement today represents another major step along the road to the dissolution of a national civil service? Is there any limit to that process, or does he simply envisage central Government as a collection of contracts? Will he confirm that he is announcing a further tranche of civil service privatisation when more than half of last year's programme is still uncompleted, even though £25 million of taxpayers' money has been spent on it?

Why is the right hon. Gentleman so confident that the exercise next year will be about value for money when last year saw Mailforce sending 84,000 annual tax advice packs to the wrong addresses, Group 4 losing a string of prisoners, expensive RAF Tornados being seriously damaged by a private contractor and privatised Astra skills centres running up thumping debts and ending up in the hands of a proven fraudster?

If the right hon. Gentleman is as interested in value for money as he claims, why did he recently override an in-house bid at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency at Swansea that was £1 million cheaper than that from the private contractor? Is it not clear that the whole obsession with privatisation has a great deal more to do with political dogma than with greater efficiency and better services?

Is it not now clear beyond doubt that any savings that have been made are the result not of improvements in quality of services but overwhelmingly the result of cuts in jobs, pay and terms and conditions? Will the right hon. Gentleman confirm that the £100 million savings that he mentioned have come wholly from reductions in the living standards of civil servants? On that point, is he aware that recent changes to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 has led John Hall of the CBI's competing for quality committee to say:

"If this clause goes on the statute book, then there will be little point in our members getting involved in public sector tendering"?

If the potential for cutting costs by reducing wage levels has been virutally removed, will the right hon. Gentleman tell the House where he expects cost savings to come from in future?

The right hon. Gentleman says that he is in favour of fair competition. In that case, why is it that, when the work of the Inland Revenue information technology office was market-tested, he disallowed any in-house bid, despite an excellent record in delivering work on time and within budget? Why has the right hon. Gentleman said nothing about the risk to confidentiality posed not only by his proposals today but by the other eccentric proposals to privatise taxpayers' records and the Patent Office? Will this not undermine the fundamental right of citizens to guaranteed privacy?

Finally, with regard to the legislation that the right hon. Gentleman announced, how will he ensure the public and parliamentary accountability of private contractors carrying out work formerly undertaken by civil servants under the direction of Ministers? Will this not mean replacing the ethic of public service for essential functions by contractors operating solely in the pursuit of profit?

Mr. Waldegrave: The hon. Member for Oldham, West (Mr. Meacher), in that long list of questions, made one thing clear—he is not one of those who are called modernisers in the Labour party. He is the old-fashioned dinosaur who represents nothing but the producer interest, and on this occasion the interests of the civil service unions and not those of the users of services.

There is no question of the dissolution of the civil service. There are 550,000 central Government civil servants—hundreds of thousands more than there were 50 years ago. They provide services that cover a hugely expanded range. It is essential that we modernise the civil service to recognise the fact that it is now a supplier of

goods and services and not the small policy advisory service that it once was. The Labour party is simply out of date on those matters.

The figures of savings that I gave are net of the expenditure on those contracts. If one takes the example of my Department, there was expenditure of about a quarter of what was necessary to get that saving. One in four—repayment of the investment four times over in the first year—is a remarkable investment, and very good value for money.

On the DVLA, as the hon. Gentleman should know, there will be a market test with an in-house bid next year.

On ideology, the hon. Member is out of touch with the people in his party in local government who, in spite of our efforts, are actually running some services.

Mr. Skinner: What about Westminster council?

Mr. Waldegrave: Yes, we would rather that they were all run by good Conservative councils. None the less, there are Labour people who actually run things—unlike the hon. Gentleman—who know that what he is talking about is complete nonsense.

For instance, listen to Jeremy Beecham, Labour leader of Newcastle city council, who has gone on the record as saying:

"the development of service-level agreements between the provider of central services within authorities and client departments have caused a re-examination of performance, with generally beneficial results".

Or Margaret Hodge, former Labour leader of Islington council:

"Real improvements have been achieved through competitive tendering".

Or Dr. Lawrence Silverman, Labour leader of Berkshire county council:

"If the private sector can provide computing, payroll and other financial services cheaper than the in-house bureaucracy, then we owe it to the people of Berkshire to make these savings".

Labour people outside in the real world are rather more up to date than the hon. Gentleman.

To return to the lists of questions, TUPE has been no threat to the programme whatsoever. Many of those bidding for central Government services—for example, in information technology—have found TUPE helpful. People have transferred with their terms of service protected—often finding, incidentally, that in the private sector the terms and conditions of service are better than they are in the public sector.

We shall take a decision about the Inland Revenue shortly. There are two bids for Treasury Ministers to evaluate, and they will compare those bids against the service that is currently provided and get the best value for money and the best quality of service for users and taxpayers. Of course we must closely examine any contract that involves the handling of confidential information to ensure that safeguards exist. There is no inherent reason why private sector workers should be less trustworthy than public sector workers, and it is extraordinary to suggest that they should be so.

Finally, on the bogus point of parliamentary accountability, for years services have been provided to Parliament and on behalf of Parliament by private sector contractors. The rules of ministerial accountability remain absolutely the same for them as if the services are provided in house, and nothing in what I am saying changes that one jot.

Mr. James Couchman (Gillingham): In considering what parts of the Inland Revenue's work may be market-tested, does my right hon. Friend agree that the Inland Revenue, especially when it has gone on fishing trips, has indulged in some of the most appalling excesses in dealing with small businesses and private individuals? Does he agree that, with proper training, the private sector can deal just as effectively with people's tax affairs as the public sector has demonstrated for many years?

Mr. Waldegrave: I agree with my hon. Friend, in that, if the relevant Ministers take the decision to contract services out, they will seek to increase quality; and there is nothing inherently impossible in finding good private sector contractors to do that work properly. They will take the decision, in that case and in all the other cases that we are considering, on the basis not just of money but of quality of service.

Mr. Matthew Taylor (Truro): Can the Secretary of State explain why the announced programme of £1·5 billion has become a less than £1 billion programme in practice? Can he explain why the 25 per cent. savings that he suggested would result from the programme have become only slightly more than 10 per cent. savings? Has he read the annual report of the National Audit Office, and can he explain why the head of the office suggested in that report that contracting out leads to weak financial monitoring, lack of clear lines of responsibility, conflict of interest and improper application of financial controls?

Will he set up a review into the costs of his programme, as it does not seem to be meeting his own efficiency targets?

Mr. Waldegrave: The head of the NAO said no such thing. He said that those were important matters which must be examined in every case—they can be and will be. There is no reason whatsoever why the British Government and civil servants cannot become just as good at handling the process of contracting out as British local authorities and many other Governments around the world.

We have made savings way above 25 per cent. I have a list showing that some are more than 50 per cent. I have one example from the Stationery Office in my constituency, where an in-house bid won. That refutes the hon. Gentleman's slur that the White Paper is all about lowering people's living standards.

The staff suggested that a move to new premises would provide a better service and save £800,000 a year. It was their idea and shows the benefits that can be achieved for services by asking those on the front line for ideas and challenging them to be innovative.

Mr. James Paice (Cambridgeshire, South-East): Is it not rather peculiar that people who would not think twice about going out to tender to have their car repaired, their house built or their drive mended have a totally different approach to public services? Why are people happy to be careful about getting value for money when it is their money, but when it is taxpayers' money they are far more cavalier and seem to be more concerned about the jobs in the civil service?

Mr. Waldegrave: It is a very high duty on the House, and on Ministers who report to the House, to get the best value for money when there is a great battle to preserve front-line services in every area. If we are wasting money on the bureaucracy in our Departments, it is a serious

[Mr. Waldegrave]

matter. If, by exercising a challenge to the in-house teams that the "competing for quality" initiative represents, we can produce real savings which can then be ploughed back into the services for which the House votes, that is what we must do.

I agree with my hon. Friend. The answer to his question is that once again, when push comes to shove, the Labour party represents not the users of services, but always the producer interest.

Mr. Terry Davis (Birmingham, Hodge Hill): If the right hon. Gentleman means what he says about competition, why have the Government refused to allow those who work in the Inland Revenue to compete with private business by bidding for their own work under the £2 billion contract for the computerised operations of the Inland Revenue?

Mr. Waldegrave: As the hon. Gentleman well knows, as a former member of the Inland Revenue Staffs Federation, there are two bids which will compete with each other and with the in-house service. The contract will not be put outside unless there are clear gains of quality or value for money over the service as provided at present.

Sir Michael Marshall (Arundel): Does my right hon. Friend accept that there will be a welcome for the progress that he has announced, but that there has been criticism of a number of what seem to be disincentives to those seeking to bid for out-sourcing? Does he accept that there is concern about the way in which specifications are drawn up, in such a way that they appear to be favouring the existing task rather than opening up more imaginative opportunities?

Does he also accept that there is some concern about the way in which some of the tenders have not been allowed full access to information about the tasks being done in house, thus making true comparison difficult? Finally, will he assure the House that, in all cases, the 17·5 per cent. VAT which applies to outside tenders has been disregarded in making proper comparisons?

Mr. Waldegrave: On the latter point, I can confirm to my hon. Friend that, as set out in the original "Competing for Quality" White Paper, the VAT is taken into consideration in such a way that the playing field is level.

My hon. Friend makes a point that I have heard from one or two outside contractors, and I shall make one general point. As both sides of the competition appear to claim that the field is sloped against them, I suspect that that means that it is pretty level. The fact that 57 per cent. were won in house and 43 per cent. out shows that the competition must have been broadly fair.

My hon. Friend touches on some real points. The purpose of our policy is to attract innovative bids from the private sector, and we must not over-specify the contracts. We are interested in the outputs—the actual service provided to the customers. We must allow innovative bids from both the private sector and in house, and must not over-specify. We are becoming better at that as Departments become more familiar with the process.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Why not market-test the Government? Certainly, if this Minister was market-tested he would be out on his neck. When the Scott inquiry ends, he will be out on his neck anyway.

The right hon. Gentleman talks about a £100 million saving in public services. However, in an attempt to shift power and democratic control away from local government, the Government have set up a commission under John Banham to abolish certain authorities in and around counties, the result of which will be to remove competition, because there will then be only unitary authorities. It is costing £1·1 billion to finance that commission. Would not it make more sense to scrap it rather than go down the road of market testing?

Mr. Waldegrave: The hon. Gentleman may recollect that the Government of the country was market-tested recently, and his party lost.

Mr. Phillip Oppenheim (Amber Valley): Has my right hon. Friend had an opportunity to read a document entitled "The Citizen's Charter", written in 1921 by Herbert Morrison—then secretary of the London Labour party? The document states that the best way to improve public services is to introduce competition. Does not that show that no amount of tacky red plastic roses, sharp suits or slick PR can disguise the fact that, far from progressing, Labour is regressing?

Mr. Waldegrave: I am interested in what my hon. Friend says. I shall read that document if he would be so good as to lend me his copy. The point my hon. Friend makes is absolutely fair. I made it about Labour councils, but it is also true that the parliamentary Labour party has gone steadily backwards, despite its modernising image, on all these matters.

Mr. D. N. Campbell-Savours (Workington): Does the right hon. Gentleman understand that the quality and integrity of the British civil service are the envy of the world? Wherever Members of Parliament go throughout the world, great tributes are always paid to our civil service.

The public are clearly hostile to what is happening—the development of what many of us can only describe as the spiv state. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the honesty of people in the private sector, but the issue is not honesty, but loyalty. To whom are the new servants responsible? It is clear that they are responsible not to the state but to the private management that controls them.

Mr. Waldegrave: I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman has ever worked in the private sector or outside the House.

Mr. Campbell-Savours: Yes, all my life.

Mr. Waldegrave: I am sure that the hon. Gentleman was loyal to his employer and observed proper confidentiality. I certainly did when I worked in the private sector. Presumably he seeks votes from private sector workers, so it is hardly helpful to him to pursue his line of argument.

The hon. Gentleman is wrong about public support. In the summer, we published an opinion poll showing that about 70 per cent. of people questioned answered yes to the question, "Should services be provided by the private sector if value for money is found to be better there than in the public sector?" It is interesting that two thirds of those working within the public sector took that same view.

Mr. Eric Pickles (Brentwood and Ongar): In my right hon. Friend's statement, he cited a list of Labour

luminaries in local government who now favour compulsory competitive tendering. I offer him a further name—that of the hon. Member for Blackburn (Mr. Straw). In *Tribune* in February—Labour Members can still read it—the hon. Gentleman said that he recognised the case for CCT in basic services.

Is not the simple truth that we want to provide quality services? We want to look at the way in which services are provided and test them against the needs of the market. So often, all that the Government do is provide services because they have always provided services, without looking for value for money. We pay an average of £230 a week to civil servants, so we have the right to ensure that that money is well spent.

Will my right hon. Friend urge Labour Members to tell their friends in the trade unions that tomorrow's strike is a waste of time? It is not about improving the public sector; it is about trying to wreck the public sector.

Mr. Waldegrave: My hon. Friend is right. He also makes the point that the hon. Member for Blackburn is often much more sensible than he pretends to be. He quotes him rightly; this is about value for money and providing the best quality of service that we possibly can. Those running the services on behalf of parties in all parts of the country well understand that.

The sums that my hon. Friend quoted as being paid by every citizen in the country towards the support of the public sector are correct. It is right that we should seek to provide value for money in return for expenditure on those huge resources.

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): Privatisation, agency agreements and quangos have taken power from the House and its ability to check the executive. These proposals, and the contracts that will follow them, will also take away many of those powers.

The Minister's position has arisen because there was a gap in the number of issues that could be dealt with by his Front Bench—the Government having scrapped the Department of Energy—and he has been given a non-job in connection with charters.

My hon. Friend the Member for Newport, West (Mr. Flynn) had to push to get answers from the Benefits Agency. Answers were published in *Hansard*, but should be produced not by the Benefits Agency but by the Ministry. When will we return to a position in which the House can check the executive and seek to control it?

Mr. Waldegrave: I am not sure how my Department relates to the Department of Energy in the way that the hon. Gentleman describes. The hon. Member for Oldham, West (Mr. Meacher) and the public sector unions clearly regard this policy as important. I agree with them. It is an important policy for which to answer to the House, and important because it will secure better quality and value for money for taxpayers and users of services.

Nothing in the policy detracts from the accountability to, and power of, the House. If services are provided by private contractors or civil servants in house, the accountability to the House remains the same, just as it does in local government if exactly the same thing is done.

Mr. Peter Luff (Worcester): Does my right hon. Friend agree that it is important to emphasise that it is a question not of cheaper services, but of better services? That is the purpose of market testing. Does he further agree that that is often achieved by a better specification of the service to be provided by the public or private sector?

Contrary to what the hon. Member for Oldham, West said in his scandalous opening remarks, Group 4—which provides a prison escort service—is a classic example of such a better service. Group 4 has lost precisely half the number of prisoners who were lost when the service was provided by the public sector, and it is also cheaper.

Mr. Waldegrave: My hon. Friend is right. As in other matters, the hon. Member for Oldham, West is out of date in his briefing. Others who lobby me about these matters have given up using that as an example, because it is true that Group 4 has done better than its predecessors in the public sector.

The fundamental point that my hon. Friend makes is right: this is about value for money, about cash and about quality. In 30 per cent. of the cases reported by Departments as part of the initiative, they have been able to report clear improvements in quality of service and value for money.

Mr. John McAllion (Dundee, East): Has the Minister read early-day motion 2587 on the Order Paper today? It calls for an immediate halt to market testing in the civil service, and was signed by more than 100 hon. Members in one night. Tomorrow, 300,000 civil servants will take part in a national strike protest action against market testing. Will the Minister answer the charges that privatisation in the civil service threatens not only the quality of public services but the confidentiality and impartiality of public servants? Above all, it threatens the accountability of those public servants to the elected representatives of the people, who sit in the House.

Mr. Waldegrave: The hon. Gentleman is completely wrong. I have spoken to no Government around the world —on the centre-left, on the centre-right or of any other persuasion—who are not following a similar path. I was in the United States last week, where Vice-President Gore is introducing competition in public services in the same way. I have read the early-day motion. It confirms what I said earlier—that the hon. Gentleman and his hon. Friends simply represent the public service unions, in a short-term sense, and do not think about the users of the services.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth (Surrey, East): Will my right hon. Friend join me in wishing the hon. Member for Oldham, West (Mr. Meacher) many happy returns of the day, but not many happy returns of the tired, self-serving opinions that we have heard this afternoon? Does my right hon. Friend agree that every contribution that we have heard from Opposition Members—I include the representative of the Liberal party who is here, the hon. Member for Truro (Mr. Taylor)—has served to underline the fact that, time and again, they put the interests of the trade unions before the interests of the public? Will my right hon. Friend join me in condemning their position?

Mr. Waldegrave: My hon. Friend puts his finger on exactly the right point. The Leader of the Opposition has been trying to pretend that his party has changed into a modern social democratic party which looks after the interests of customers and citizens and so forth, but it is still the same old Labour party which, whenever it comes down to it, represents its paymasters in the way that it always has.

Mr. Paul Flynn (Newport, West): If it is about quality, why has the Patent Office in my constituency, which has been awarded the charter mark for its brilliant work, been selected for market testing, management buy-out and possible privatisation? The people who work there feel that they have not been given an award but have been slipped the black spot, and they were here yesterday to complain about it.

Does the Minister not realise that some areas of the civil service, such as the Patent Office, have nothing to do with the market but have to serve the public in a unique way? By encouraging innovation and inventions, they act as the guardian of intellectual property. They cannot be run by Megagreed plc or Group 4. Does the Minister realise what he is doing? We still have—just about—the least politicised and the least corrupt civil service in the world, and the Government will destroy it, bit by bit, for pure ideology.

Mr. Waldegrave: That ideology is one that is shared by many members of the hon. Gentleman's party who are running councils up and down the land. I congratulate the Patent Office on winning its charter mark. The quality of its work is very high, and is no reason why that quality should not be maintained under different ownership. It would have to be if any proposal for a change of ownership was carried through.

Mr. Douglas French (Gloucester): Every Conservative Member wishes to congratulate my right hon. Friend on the excellent progress that the market testing programme is making. As to the 57 per cent. by value in-house bids which have been successful, is he entirely satisfied with the methods of costing used in those bids? Has he any means of verifying whether those costing methods are accurate and sensible?

Mr. Waldegrave: We will be presenting fuller and more detailed figures in the citizens charter White Paper, probably in February. I am satisfied that the figures are correct. I have no doubt that the Departments concerned will get better at the process of market testing in the years ahead as the programme continues. I am broadly satisfied that the figures are right and that the competitions have been fair.

Mr. Alfred Morris (Manchester, Wythenshawe): In a parliamentary reply yesterday, I was told that Manchester city council's objections were being carefully considered, together with those of other consultees. What proportion of the consultees does the Minister expect to be content with what he has said today? Will he, in consultation with his colleagues, try to ensure that Manchester has an opportunity to pursue its objections?

Mr. Waldegrave: I think that the hon. Gentleman may be referring to the wrong statement. I do not think that there is any issue about consultation with Manchester city council in particular. I have often consulted the council on a range of matters, but I am not sure that this matter is one for consultation. I am sure that Manchester city council could teach some Opposition Members about the necessity to contract out services in order to obtain the best benefits for the users of such services.

I may have misunderstood the hon. Gentleman's question, in which case we can perhaps have a word about it later.

Mrs. Angela Knight (Erewash): Does my right hon. Friend agree that market testing will not only eliminate waste but is the best way of ensuring value and quality in public services? As someone who has recently come from local government, I assure my right hon. Friend that the introduction of competitive tendering for local services results in a real improvement in services to residents, at lower cost.

Mr. Waldegrave: That has been the experience of many local authorities of all political persuasions throughout the country. Central Government will somewhat belatedly reap the same benefits. That should have happened years ago, and in that respect we are catching up with local government—and about time, too.

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): Does my right hon. Friend agree that we have here the touchstone of difference between the Opposition and the Conservative party? We are about the delivery of quality service at a reasonable and decent price. Time and again, the Opposition fail to realise that the control is in the letting of the contract, not in the giving of jobs. The Opposition are about the delivery of jobs to unions, while we are about delivery of service to the public.

Mr. Waldegrave: My hon. Friend puts his finger on it. These exchanges have been extremely instructive in reminding us that, whatever glitz Labour tries to put on with the help of its advertising agency and the rest, it remains the same old Labour party. My hon. Friend exactly defined the difference between the two parties.

Mr. John Garrett (Norwich, South): The Chancellor of the Duchy said that the proposed legislation will represent no departure from established principles. If that is so, for which wholly privatised services are any Ministers now accountable to Parliament? Will the right hon. Gentleman confirm that in no case have the results or performance —rather than the cost and apparent savings through redundancy—of market-tested Government contracts been published? Will he undertake to publish the results in terms of quality of service of market-tested contracts? Finally, will any of the work of administrative grades 1 to 5 be market-tested, or is this a mandarin-free zone?

Mr. Waldegrave: On the first issue, we are talking about market testing where the responsibility for the provision of services remains with the Government and there is no change whatsoever in accountability. If an industrial operation such as British Telecom is sold into privatisation, that is not part of a market-testing programme: it is returning to the private sector something that should always have been in the private sector.

The hon. Gentleman's second point was good. I set out in the code of practice in my Department's open government White Paper that it is right to publish the quality measures that attach to service contracts. I agree with the hon. Gentleman in that respect.

As to his final point, a scrutiny study of the terms, conditions, selection and recruitment of the first three grades in the civil service will shortly be published. No doubt we shall subsequently have a good debate, perhaps in the Select Committee.

Points of Order

4.52 pm

Sir Giles Shaw (Pudsey): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I raise this point of order, which relates to events that occurred in the House last night, with some regret, but in view of the scale of the problem and the possibility that Tellers were switched and that votes were spuriously challenged. There was also some difficulty in the Serjeant at Arms obtaining access to the Lobbies at your request, Madam Speaker. As you are the guardian not only of our traditions but of our reputation, would it not be prudent for you to make your own inquiries into what occurred and to give the House your considered advice?

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. I can certainly tell the hon. Gentleman and the House in general that I will take no more points of order on that matter. At this stage, I am not seeking an inquest across the Floor of the House. Neither do I want a re-run of what occurred last night, when there was disgraceful behaviour on the part of many hon. Members in an attempt to disrupt our procedures.

I assure the House that it will not be left there. I will make my own inquiries. Some hon. Members believe that the matter should be referred to the Procedure Committee. That is up to them. The House must allow me to make my own inquiries. The matter is best left there.

Mr. Roger Evans (Monmouth): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Does it relate to last night's events?

Mr. Evans: It does in the sense that the record of the vote——

Madam Speaker: Order. I have dealt with last night's events. I am being firm. I will take no more points of order on that subject. I shall make my own inquiries as soon as I am allowed to leave the Chair. Leave it to me now.

Mr. Graham Riddick (Colne Valley): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. You may be interested to know that the Railways Bill has now passed all its stages in another place very successfully.

Mr. Terry Davis (Birmingham, Hodge Hill): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I refer to the statement made earlier by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and to the subsequent exchanges. The right hon. Gentleman misled the House by confusing an in-house bid from the Inland Revenue with an attempted bid from the people who actually do the work in the Inland Revenue. Must we wait for yet another Scott inquiry before we can show the right hon. Gentleman up yet again for what he is?

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. William Waldegrave): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. I did not mislead the House in any way. I set out the situation exactly as it exists. There are two contracts in, and no strategic decision was taken to contract out. That will be judged against the value and quality of the service provided by those people presently doing the job.

Mr. Paul Flynn (Newport, West): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. As the defender of Back Benchers, I draw your attention to the way in which the statement was introduced on the annunciator, which simply displayed the words "Competing for quality", with no indication of the subject or the Department involved. I do not want to embarrass any Conservative Members, but I asked a number of them whether they knew what was meant by those words and none of them was able to tell me.

You, Madam Speaker, always insist that we are in our places to hear such statements. Few Members, unless they know precisely the title of all Government documents, would have been aware that the statement concerned market testing. That subject might be of vital interest to their constituencies, yet right hon. and hon. Members who were in their offices might have missed the opportunity to hear the statement and to question the Chancellor of the Duchy.

Madam Speaker: It would be helpful if the titles were a little more explanatory. Often, I am not sure what a statement is about until I have read it. Perhaps we may have fuller explanations in future.

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. During the statement of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy, reference was made to early-day motion 2587. Heading the list of those putting their names to that motion is the hon. Member for Dundee, West (Mr. Ross), whom I informed of my intention to raise this point of order. No marks appear next to that hon. Gentleman's name to suggest that he has a registrable interest in the issue. He is of course a consultant to the National Union of Public Employees. He is leading the charge on an issue——

Madam Speaker: Order. The new rule does not start until next Session.

Mr. Heald: Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. My understanding is that the decision that right hon. and hon. Members should in future register their interests if they are to present early-day motions in which they have an interest was taken as long ago as June. In this case, the hon. Members concerned are orchestrating an early-day motion on behalf of the trade unions that pay them.

Madam Speaker: It was made clear at the time that that rule would not apply until the next Session.

Mr. D. N. Campbell-Savours (Workington): He is thick.

Madam Speaker: No, I am trying to be helpful to the hon. Member for Hertfordshire, North (Mr. Heald) without wanting to embarrass anybody. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will leave it at that, but he is free to obtain more information from the Clerk of the Register of Members' Interests.

Mr. Riddick *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. The hon. Gentleman is attempting a higher quota of points of order than usual.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Ordered,

That, at this day's sitting, notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order No. 15 (Prayers against statutory instruments, &c. (negative procedure)), the Speaker shall put the Question necessary to dispose of proceedings on the Motions in the name of Mr. John Smith relating to Sports Grounds and Sporting Events, namely the Question already proposed from the Chair,

not later than one and a half hours after the commencement of proceedings on the first such Motion; and the said Motions may be proceeded with after the expiry of the time for opposed business.—*[Mr. Arbuthnot.]*

Mr. Tony Marlow (Northampton, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I hope that you will not think me a voyeur, because I am not, but last night I noticed that you were fanning yourself with the Order Paper when you were in the Chair, because obviously it was too hot in the Chamber.

As all right hon. and hon. Members know, the Chamber has the best air conditioning and is the coolest part of the entire Palace of Westminster. If it is hot in here, it is unbearable in the rest of the House. It is hot, sweaty, stuffy, stinky and insufferable. It is a hoary old chestnut that has come back time and again.

You said, Madam Speaker, that you would be inquiring into the events of last night. That is most welcome and worth while. Will you also inquire into the air conditioning, temperature and ventilation in the House? It is well beyond time that something was done about them.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman might save time in the Chamber if he referred the matter to the appropriate Committee, but I will do it for him. We now come to the second motion——

Mr. Riddick: On a point of order, Madam Speaker—just a quick one.

Madam Speaker: No, the hon. Gentleman has had one—wait until next term.

Orders of the Day

Members' Pensions

4.59 pm

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): I beg to move,

That this House endorses the proposals to give the trustees of the Parliamentary Contributory Pensions Fund power to provide a scheme by which Members may enhance their pensions by making additional voluntary contributions, and to appoint a provider for the scheme.

I understand that with this it will be convenient to discuss at the same time the following motion:

That this House endorses the proposal to consolidate the regulations governing the Parliamentary Contributory Pensions Fund in one set of regulations, and to incorporate amendments to the scheme implementing past Top Salaries Review Body recommendations and certain provisions of certain Social Security and Finance Acts.

Before turning to the details of the proposals for regulations that the House will consider, perhaps I should remind hon. Members of the slightly unusual procedure that we use for dealing with amendments to the pension scheme.

Since 1987, the parliamentary pension scheme has been contained in regulations, changes to which are made under the negative procedure with the consent of the Treasury and after consulting those likely to be affected, in particular the trustees of the scheme. But so that the House has an opportunity to make its views known on the proposed changes, a debate on an amendable motion is held before the regulations are made—and this is that debate.

I should add that the documents that the House has seen are proposals for regulations and it may be necessary to make some further minor refinements before they are laid. If there is any question of significant amendment, I shall of course bring it to the attention of the House. I hope, in any event, to begin the making process before the end of November.

Before reaching this stage, there has been detailed consultation with the trustees of the scheme and I am glad to tell the House that they are happy with the proposals now being considered, as I hope the right hon. Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris) will confirm.

I take the opportunity on behalf of all hon. Members to pay a warm tribute to the trustees and their chairman, the right hon. Member for Wythenshawe. There is no doubt that they do sterling work on behalf of present and former Members and their dependants, in which they are greatly assisted by Tony Lewis and his staff in the Fees Office, who have earned the gratitude of all of us for their efforts.

I turn now to the proposed regulations and, first, to those for setting up a scheme to enable members to increase their pensions by paying additional contributions. The House will remember that last year, when we were debating pay restraint, some concern was expressed about its possible effect on pensions. I suggested that the trustees should examine the possibility of introducing an additional voluntary contributions scheme, known to the technicians in the field as an AVC scheme.

Quite simply, the idea is to increase pension benefits within Inland Revenue limits and to make full use of the tax concessions available for this kind of saving. If an AVC scheme is provided through an occupational pension

scheme, as distinct from being free standing, there are many advantages in simplifying administration and keeping costs down. I said last year that, if the trustees felt that it would be helpful to explore the possibilities more fully, I would be happy to assist.

Following the debate, I had a meeting with the trustees, at which we agreed that an AVC scheme could offer Members benefits that would outlast any period of pay restraint. I shall leave them, and in particular the right hon. Member for Wythenshawe, to explain the many months of work that ensued in choosing a suitable pension provider and in deciding what benefits should be made available to those who wanted to contribute. My part is limited to the regulations that are before the House today.

The regulations provide for the establishment of an AVC scheme to provide benefits within Inland Revenue limits for such Members who choose to contribute, and so improve on benefits available under our scheme. The regulations describe how membership of the scheme will operate and the limits on contributions, which are in line with current Inland Revenue limits. The type of any maximum allowable benefit that may be provided by an AVC scheme are set out in the regulations, but I should make it clear that this is permissive.

When the chairman of the trustees speaks to the motion, should he catch your eye, Madam Deputy Speaker, he will no doubt explain the particular benefits that can be arranged through the contract with the pension provider. In the unlikely event of that provider's insolvency, the fund would pay the benefits earned by the contributions.

I shall not say more about the AVC scheme, as my part has been quite a small enabling role to ensure that the trustees have regulations within which they can operate the scheme. I know that the House will be extremely grateful for the work that they and the Fees Office have done in setting it up.

I turn now to the proposals covered in the second motion on the Order Paper for consolidating and amending regulations. By 1987, the rules of our pension scheme could be found in seven statutes, with subsidiary rules in six statutory instruments. To make further changes entailed amending already complicated legislation, and it was not always easy to find parliamentary time for primary legislation. The Parliamentary and Other Pensions Act 1987 deemed the rules of the scheme to be in regulations and gave me, the Leader of the House, the power to amend the scheme by making further regulations.

At the time, we expected to be able to consolidate the scheme's existing provisions fairly quickly, but a further Top Salaries Review Body reference led to more proposals for changes. The work of consolidating previous provisions and incorporating changes agreed since that date has been considerable, and again I must pay tribute to the efforts of the trustees and the Fees Office in what has proved to be a very large task.

The new proposed regulations will now give us a single document incorporating all the current provisions of the scheme. In consolidating, we have taken the opportunity to eliminate from the regulations any obsolete provisions and those that apply only to former Members and survivors have been put in schedules. Old provisions that may still determine the rights of pensioners will be adequately saved.

The regulations have also incorporated some changes in Inland Revenue rules and other overriding legislation—for example, a right required by the Social Security Act 1986 for Members to be able to opt out of membership. Perhaps the House would find it most convenient if I were to go briefly through the scheme as it stands and point out significant changes.

I turn first to part C, which deals with membership and which has some new features. Social security legislation requires occupational pension schemes to give members a right not to belong to the scheme—to opt out. It is for schemes to decide the details of how the option should be made and how frequently it can be exercised. Members can opt out at any time, but because of the special features of parliamentary life, it has seemed sensible to give Members the opportunity, within three months of the date of a general election or by-election, to make the decision.

We have provided that a Member who has opted out can apply to rejoin as from the date of any general election or by-election at which he is elected to the House. I hope that the House will find the arrangements satisfactory. There is no change for the arrangements for the supplementary scheme for Ministers and other office holders, which were always voluntary.

There is another change in part C that I should mention. Following a TSRB recommendation in 1988, the Ministerial and Other Pensions and Salaries Act 1991 made provision for Prime Ministers and Speakers, who until then had been excluded from membership, to join the fund with effect from 28 February 1991—the date of the passing of the Act. Part C provides for that.

Part D deals with contributions and the only change to which I should draw Members' attention is a new limit on contributions required by Inland Revenue rules, which applies to schemes generally. Members joining the House from 1 June 1989 may not contribute in any year on a salary higher than the maximum permitted by the Inland Revenue. However, if Members feel that this is in some way threatening, I should say in view of yesterday's debate that they may find it ironic that the permitted maximum at the moment is £75,000 a year. I do not imagine that this provision will cause huge difficulty for Members.

Part E, which deals with pensionable service, and part F, pension entitlement, are essentially unchanged, except again that a maximum pension provision now applies for Members joining the House after 1 June 1989. The maximum pension for such Members cannot exceed two thirds of the permitted maximum.

Part G provides for those retiring to take part of their pension in a tax-free lump sum. There is no change to this, except that, for those joining the scheme at 1 June 1989, the maximum pension limit will serve to limit the lump sum.

Part H deals with early retirement and early abated pensions, and part J deals with ill-health pensions. There is no change to those provisionssmall,. In part K, which deals with pensions for widows, widowers and children, we have taken the opportunity to eliminate a small discriminatory provision, which, I am happy to be able to assure the House, has never been invoked. The children of deceased female Members are now to be treated in exactly the same way as the children of male Members, instead of equal treatment depending on the trustees' discretion.

Apart from being desirable in itself, it can be included in consolidating regulations because it is understood to be required by European law with effect from 17 May 1990, or the date of the celebrated Barber judgment with which I wrestled for a long time as the Secretary of State

[Mr. Tony Newton]

for Social Security. Indeed, my successor is, in a sense, still wrestling with the consequences of that judgment, as are the courts in various parts of Europe.

In part L there is no change to the provision of a gratuity payable on death in service, except one following the imposition of the permitted maximum.

Part M is entirely new. The House will remember that in 1991 the Top Salaries Review Body recommended—and we accepted—that, if a former Member died during the first five years of retirement, a Member's pension should continue to be paid to the surviving spouse for the remainder of the five years. This part of the regulations implements that recommendation.

When the other regulations were laid in 1991, arising from the TSRB report, my predecessor, the then Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House, who is now the Secretary of State for Transport, and who has had other things on his mind recently, explained that the recommendation had proved difficult to implement, but gave a commitment to introduce regulations at a later date. The regulations will apply with effect from 1 April 1992, which is when the other recommendations in the TSRB report of 1991 took effect.

The reason for the guarantee is, essentially, to ensure that beneficiaries receive value for contributions paid. The regulations provide that if the total of any pension payable to the dependants of a Member who has died within the first five years of retirement is less than the pension payable had he lived, the difference shall be paid to the spouse. The amount of the Member's pension includes any annual increase under the Pensions Increase Act to compensate for inflation.

The remainder of part M deals with other possible events during the five years of retirement, and it is necessarily complex. If the spouse also dies, any balance due under the guarantee should be paid to the spouse's estate. If there is no surviving spouse, any eligible children will receive the benefit of the guarantee. If there are no survivors at all, the amount due under the guarantee is payable to the estate. I understand that the proposals are acceptable to the trustees, and I hope that they will also be acceptable to the House.

I pass briefly over part N, which covers refunds, part P which covers transfers, and part Q, which covers added years. They are technical sections in which there is only one change of substance, with which I shall now deal.

As I said, the membership of the Prime Minister and the Speaker is one of the outstanding TSRB recommendations falling to be implemented. The TSRB reviewed the Prime Minister's and Speaker's pension arrangements in 1988. It thought it unfair that Prime Ministers and Speakers could not remain in the parliamentary fund on taking office. As the House will know, Prime Ministers and Speakers are entitled by virtue of their office to a special pension from the Consolidated Fund. The TSRB thought that they were still at a disadvantage when compared with Ministers, as they were not able to contribute to a pension scheme on their parliamentary salary.

The amendments that I am proposing would put that right with effect from 28 February 1991, the date of the passing of the enabling Act. The proposals would allow for a Prime Minister or Speaker who wanted to stay in the scheme to keep any deferred pension in the supplementary scheme earned on service between 28 February 1991 and the date of appointment. They would also mean that any contributions that he or she had made to the fund before that date must be used to buy added years if he or she wishes to stay in the fund, of must be returned immediately. A further issue has been raised by the provisions, which we are currently examining. If anything of substance emerges I shall, of course, return to the House with the details.

Mr. David Shaw (Dover): Before my right hon. Friend concludes, may I mention a matter that I know is not wholly within his powers? This morning I attended a meeting of Maxwell pensioners. Can my right hon. Friend comment on the fact that the accounts of the Members' pension fund for the year to 31 March 1992 have been audited only in the summer of 1993, some 15 or 16 months after the event? I believe that that is worse than Robert Maxwell's record on his own pension fund accounts.

That suggested—on examination, I found it to be true—that the administration of our scheme is not kept up to date with common practice in the private sector, although there may be attempts from time to time to keep up to date the benefit and other arrangements. Could we perhaps ensure that greater priority is given to the organisation and administration of our scheme so that it is brought up to best private sector practice? Perhaps we might even set the standards of organisation and administration that we should like the rest of the country to follow.

Mr. Newton: I am aware that my hon. Friend has tabled five parliamentary questions on such matters. I have not yet been able to reply to him. I can tell him, however, that I hope shortly to be in a position to do so. My understanding is that the delay to which he referred is, at least in part, due to the special work needed to calculate pensions arising from the result of the 1992 election. I shall provide him with full answers as soon as possible. I also observe—I hope not rashly—that I would find it hard to see a parallel between the late Robert Maxwell, the right hon. Member for Wythenshawe and Mr. Tony Lewis, our accountant.

5.16 pm

Mr. Alfred Morris (Manchester, Wythenshawe): I am most grateful to the Leader of the House for the warmth and kindliness of what he said about the work of the managing trustees of the parliamentary contributory pension fund. The House will expect me, as chairman of the trustees, to give their views on both sets of regulations. First of all, however, I want to respond to the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman about the possibility of some redrafting or, in his word, "refinements". I see no difficulty in what he proposes; nor, I am sure, will any of my fellow trustees, two of whom are with us in this debate.

In my intervention in the pay debate yesterday, I drew attention on behalf of the trustees to the erosion of pension benefits payable to Members and, more particularly, to their dependants, when there is a freeze on parliamentary pay. I recalled then that the untimely death of our much respected former colleague, Judith Chaplin, set the problems of dependants in very sharp relief. That sad event underlined the fact that, if a Member dies during a pay freeze, the effects on the incomes of his or her dependants can be lifelong, since pensions and other benefits are based

on the parliamentary salary in the deceased Member's last year of service and take no account of any subsequent increase in salary to compensate for the freeze.

As the Leader of the House indicated in his speech on parliamentary pay on 25 November 1992, the problems that arise from death in service during a period of pay restraint can be met, to an extent, by introducing an additional voluntary contributions scheme. This is why, since that debate, the managing trustees, in conjunction with the Leader of the House, who has been unfailingly helpful, the secretariat of the parliamentary contributory pension fund and the Treasury, have been working on the details of regulations to facilitate the setting up by the trustees of such a scheme. The regulations now before the House are the result of our labours.

The regulations will empower the trustees to appoint a provider or providers for a wide-ranging additional voluntary contribution scheme. Although the final details have yet to be confirmed, it is expected that Members will be able to purchase additional death benefit equal to twice the Member's salary, thus doubling the current benefit, and additional widow's and widower's pensions to take their overall benefit to two thirds of the Member's pension, which is the Inland Revenue maximum. There will also be a money purchase scheme in which Members may, within overall Inland Revenue limits on pension contributions and total benefits, purchase additional pension for themselves.

The managing trustees are content with the provisions of the scheme which the regulations offer. It will enable Members to provide extra benefits for their widows and widowers in keeping with the efforts made by the trustees over many years to provide more assistance to dependants. We were successful in obtaining an increase in widows' and widowers' pensions from one half to five eighths of the Member's pension, and will go on seeking new ways of helping them in the future.

I turn now to the consolidating regulations. These regulations amalgamate all the governing legislation of the pension fund into one document and are mainly designed to reflect the scheme as it now exists. The regulations also take account of overriding social security legislation, as the Leader of the House made clear, and of recommendations in the last report of the Senior Salaries Review Body—formerly the Top Salaries Review Body—which still await implementation. The alterations to the fund were commented on briefly in my recent briefing note to all hon. Members, which I hope will have been of help in explaining the practical effect of all that is now proposed.

In today's debate, I want to elaborate on the changes recommended by the Senior Salaries Review Body. One of its most welcome recommendations, which is now to be implemented, was the introduction of a five-year guarantee for widows' and widowers' pensions. This will mean that, if an ex-Member dies within five years of the commencement of his or her pension, the widow or widower will be guaranteed a pension equal to that payable to the Member until the end of the five-year period. That will be of considerable assistance to widows and widowers as they adjust to their altered financial situation at what can be a most stressful time.

The SSRB also recommended that Prime Ministers and Speakers should be allowed to retain membership of the parliamentary contributory pension fund after assuming those offices. That will be on the basis, as we have heard from the Leader of the House, of the relationship between the reduced Member's salary and the full Member's salary and, on current rates, means that they will accrue around three quarters of a year's pensionable service for every full year of actual service. I can report that the trustees agree that membership of the PCPF should now be available to Prime Ministers and Speakers.

The trustees of the pension fund have had considerable success in improving the scheme. As well as the increases in widows' and widowers' pensions, there have in recent years been improvements to the death-in-service lump sum benefit, in the provisions for ill-health retirement and in reducing the Member's contribution from 9 per cent. to 6 per cent. We will, of course, keep abreast of current developments in pension provision and will not hesitate to press for further changes to the scheme that can be of benefit to Members.

I listened to what the hon. Member for Dover (Mr. Shaw) said about his parliamentary questions. There are very particular problems in a scheme like ours. As the Leader of the House said, the timing of the general election in April 1992 was a complicating factor. I do not want to anticipate the answers to the hon. Gentleman's parliamentary questions, but I am absolutely certain that he will be well satisfied with those answers when they are given.

The trustees support and endorse both these sets of regulations, which they believe will give Members wider choice in their pension provisions and, most importantly, enable them to provide additional benefits for their widows or widowers and other dependants. I commend the regulations to the House. As before, the trustees wish to place on record the invaluable help that they and those they seek to assist have received from Tony Lewis, the Accountant of the House of Commons, and among others Alan Marskell, Michael Fletcher and Neil Crawley of the Fees Office. I am sure that their work, to which the Leader of the House referred so warmly, is deeply appreciated by the House as a whole.

5.25 pm

Sir Peter Hordern (Horsham): I add my thanks to those of the right hon. Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris) to our Accountant and his assistants in the Fees Office for looking after our pension fund and—this may not be so generally known in this place—the beneficiaries of the Members fund.

When the right hon. Member for Wythenshawe and I first came to the House, there were no pensions for those who had just retired. The Members fund was instituted to help those who had no means from the House to provide for a pension. That fund still exists. The right hon. Gentleman and I know from our respective knowledge on both sides of the House of the considerable assistance that the Members fund has offered to those ex-Members of the House for whom there was formally no provision.

I want to follow the comments of the right hon. Member for Wythenshawe, not so much with regard to the provisions of the additional voluntary contributions, which are welcome on both sides of the House, as in reflecting the background to the provisions and what I hope might be in store for us later.

The House recognises that we should not award extra benefits to ourselves unless they have been earned through our own parliamentary fund and have been recommended as extra benefits by the Top Salaries Review Body, which I believe has now changed its name to the Senior Salaries

[Sir Peter Hordern]

Review Body. The problem is that Government Departments are always changing the names and it is sometimes difficult to keep up. I think that the SSRB will seek evidence in the coming year from hon. Members about what might be done in respect of our salaries and our pensions and other benefits. We must all welcome that.

I believe that the SSRB's recommendations will be based on the valuation of our scheme as at 1 April this year, in respect of which the Government Actuary will, for the first time, pronounce on the level of contribution from Members and from the Government. Formerly, the Actuary had the power only to make recommendations about the Government contribution. Members were stuck with their own contribution, which, so far as I am aware, was the highest contribition of any pension fund in the country. Although that contribution has been reduced substantially from 9 to 6 per cent., it is still very much on the high side.

Generally speaking, in company pension funds the provision is normally two thirds by the employer and one third by the employee. When the Government Actuary examines our fund again and sees the scale of the surplus that I anticipate will be available, I hope that he will recommend a higher contribution by the Treasury—I am sure my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will have some difficulty in negotiating that—and a reduced contribution by Members. Six per cent. is still very high.

Not all hon. Members may be aware of the fact that, when the TSRB last made recommendations, it included a provision for those Members who had made capital payments towards buying extra years. As it happened, the provisions of our pension fund were improved so that it was no longer necessary to have purchased those years. Quite rightly, the TSRB recommended that those who had made those extra contributions should get their money back. The House will not be surprised to learn that that was regarded as disgraceful retrospective legislation, and we were not allowed to have back the £3 million of what I regard as our money.

I stress that this is not the Government's pension fund; it is ours. We have every right; as long as the Senior Salaries Review Body recommends that we should have an extra benefit, that is how it should be. If, on the ground of retrospection, the Government believe that that would not be suitable because it would create all sorts of precedents in other fields, which I also quite understand, that £3 million should be available to us, or our wives and widows, in some other manner. Therefore, I ask the Leader of the House to bear that in mind, because it is certain that we shall come back to the SSRB with just such a recommendation in due course.

That is not the only recommendation that we shall make. We should have had, by right, a provision for widows of two thirds rather than five eighths. The House will note that we are only now able to have two thirds by means of additonal voluntary contribution. The more normal provision in the private sector is for a widow's pension of two thirds, and that is what we should have, if the fund can stand it and if the SSRB so recommends.

It is important to make the point that our scheme is rather peculiar, in that it is a late entry scheme. That has disadvantages for Members, because they must make their contributions in a greater way than they would if contributions extended over a longer period. It is important to recognise that Members need to make provision for their old age and for their widows in a comparatively short period. The SSRB should take further account of that. Many hon. Members may be able to think of other recommendations that the body should consider, and I hope that they will. When the SSRB comes to taking written or oral evidence, I hope that it will think seriously about how Members who retire, and their dependants, can best be provided for, perhaps by looking carefully at the provisions in other schemes in the private sector.

I very much hope that, when the Government Actuary considers our scale of contributions, he will come to the conclusion that the Government should be paying more and that Members should be paying less. That is what the right of the matter is. I will give evidence to the SSRB to that effect, and I hope that other hon. Members will, too.

It is a shame that there are a number of hon. Members who do not appreciate that ours is a funded scheme, not a pay-as-you-go scheme, and we have had material benefits from having such a scheme. Although they must be recommended by the review body, the surpluses that arise should go to Members and their dependants. There is scope for more generous treatment for those who have already retired from the House, and for their dependants. They should not be as dependent on the Members fund as they are at the moment.

The Members fund, quite properly, is dependent on careful means testing before any benefit can be paid. If possible, I should like to see provision incorporated in the next SSRB for extra benefits to be paid to Members who have retired, and to their dependants, as a right. That matter has not been covered before. I mention it in the context of a fund which, in my opinion, has been well managed and should show a substantial surplus from 1 April this year when the Actuary comes to consider it next year, and when the SSRB considers the Actuary's report on what provisions are necessary.

I hope that, when the time comes, all hon. Members will make their views known to the SSRB, not just for our sakes but for those who have already served as Members of the House, and for their dependants, too.

5.34 pm

Mr. Tom Cox (Tooting): It is a great pleasure to follow the right hon. Member for Horsham (Sir P. Hordern). In the few moments that he spoke, he touched on matters about which all hon. Members feel strongly, irrespective of which side of the Chamber we sit.

Some of my comments will centre on the point that the right hon. Gentleman rightly made about ex-Members and their families. In addition, I congratulate the Leader of the House on his clear outline of the proposals. That is of great benefit to us. I welcome the debate. All of us know that hon. Members on both sides of the House—my right hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris) is one, but there are many others—have had years of service in the House and have always been in the forefront of looking after the interests of their colleagues. On issues such as this, we are colleagues. This is not a party political issue on which we attack each other; it is a matter of crucial importance to all.

Like other hon. Members, I pay warm tribute to Mr. Lewis and his staff. I have often been to see him to talk about an issue, to which I shall come in a few moments. I

do not think that any Officer of the House is more understanding or more willing to meet us and explain issues that, at times, can be complex. I thank him and his colleagues most sincerely, as I am sure does every hon. Member when, as they often do, they come into contact with him.

Every hon. Member, irrespective of what his job may be, looks to the day when he will receive his pension, and we are obviously concerned about what that pension will be. For a long period, in the House and doubtless elsewhere, when salaries were low, the fact that one day people would receive a pension was crucial to them and their families.

I take part in the debate not only because, as a Member, I am interested in the kind of pension that one day I hope to receive, but because I am an officer of the parliamentary Labour party benevolent fund. The issues that we are discussing are of particular interest to me as an officer of that fund.

The right hon. Member for Horsham, my right hon. Friend the Member for Wythenshawe, the Leader of the House, I and perhaps others have been Members of the House for a long time. All of us know of colleagues who loyally served the House as Members for many years. They were superb parliamentarians and great friends of ours, regardless of party. Sadly, they had a pretty rough deal when they ceased to be Members and, in many cases, they have passed on. The widows and families of those ex-Members still have a rough time.

I know ex-Members who were not here for long. My right hon. Friend the Member for Wythenshawe touched on that point. They were not here for long, but they left young families; that is why I very much welcome the inclusion of the five-year proposal, which will give widows and widowers a guaranteed amount of money for which they qualify.

Former colleagues who, sad to say, were not here a long time—my right hon. Friend the Member for Wythenshawe mentioned one of them—would have served for many years had they wished to. The lack of provision for those people presented, and in some cases still presents, hardship to their wives and families. Therefore, I welcome the change.

The debate provides an opportunity to remember ex-colleagues and their families. I know six former Members who were not here long and do not have family dependants, who have found it virtually impossible to find employment, basically because of their age. That happens in many walks of life. In his superb speech, the right hon. Member for Horsham said that we need to consider that problem.

Through the parliamentary Labour party benevolent fund, we pay a small grant twice a year, the main beneficiaries of which are the widows of former Members. Some of those ladies are now 80 or 90 years old. Their husbands were Members for many years at a time when salaries were deplorably low and, as other hon. Members have said, there were no pensions.

As I have said in many debates, I have the greatest respect for the Leader of the House, because he is one of the few Ministers who listens to what is said in the House and takes note of it. I mean that sincerely, and he knows it. I realise that it will not be easy, but I beg him to give attention to our ex-colleagues who are still alive and feel that they have had a rough deal—some of them are angry about that. The right hon. Member for Horsham gave an idea of how the matter might be considered. I also ask the Leader of the House to consider, in particular, the widows of former Members, who are now elderly ladies.

I pay tribute again to the support that I often received from Mr. Lewis when I went to see him about the pitiful cases of wives of former Members whom we knew. We may have met those wives in the House—we all bring our wives here from time to time. We now hear and see the pathetic financial state in which those ladies find themselves, and I believe that we have to consider their situation.

Mr. Alfred Morris: I am grateful to my hon. Friend. He is right to draw our attention to the compelling claims of the widows of former Members who live in circumstances of hardship. I am grateful to him for having drawn my attention to a number of cases with which he has been dealing as an officer of the benevolent fund of the parliamentary Labour party.

There are two points to make. First, an enormous amount of help has been given via the House of Commons Members' fund to people living in circumstances of hardship. Secondly, we want to do very much more, as the right hon. Member for Horsham (Sir. P. Hordern) said. My hon. Friend the Member for Tooting (Mr. Cox) has made an extremely powerful contribution to the work of the parliamentary Labour party benevolent fund and the House of Commons Members fund. I can assure him that we would like, in contact with him, to do even more for former Members and their dependants, who at present, without many people knowing about it, live in hardship.

Mr. Cox: I thank my right hon. Friend for that comment. The widows of former Members are on very low incomes, but they have pride. They do not want to let people know about their sad circumstances. I am sure that we all understand that. We may tell them it is silly and that they should not feel that way, but they do. We have a duty to respect their attitude. We must consider the issue afresh. We are not talking about vast sums of money. The outgoings of an elderly person are less than those of young people with young children.

I paid tribute to the Leader of the House, and I beg him to look again at the sad and, in some respects, pathetic cases. We know the people involved and want to help them. Will the Leader of the House look seriously at the comments made, not only by me, but by the right hon. Member for Horsham, who made a superb speech, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Whythenshawe.

5.47 pm

Mr. Newton: I need respond to the debate only briefly as I sense that the speeches of both my right hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Sir P. Hordern) and the hon. Member for Tooting (Mr. Cox) were primarily designed to mark the cards of various people—myself, the Treasury and the Senior Salaries Review Body—rather than elicit an immediate response. I hope that I was right to read their remarks in that way.

I am extremely grateful to the hon. Member for Tooting for his kind words about me. I shall try to continue to earn his commendations, as receiving such marks is a relatively rare experience for someone who has been on the Front Bench for as long as I have. I shall consider what the hon. Gentleman said about the widows of ex-Members.

[Mr. Newton]

I was mildly puzzled by the reference of my right hon. Friend the Member for Horsham to spouses' pensions, as the proposal to increase the proportion from five eighths was specifically rejected by the Top Salaries Review Body in June 1991. It said that our provisions compared favourably with occupational pension schemes generally, 80 per cent. of which continued to provide a spouse's pension of only half the Member's pension. No doubt the SSRB, the successor body to the TSRB, will consider the suggestions of my right hon. Friend and others when it considers the subject following the Government Actuary's valuation of the scheme.

I have had brought to my attention a quotation of which I was previously unaware. Whatever criticisms may be made of, or further improvements sought in, our scheme, as a result of improvements over the years, the scheme is now quite good, and much better than it was. I was mildly amused to read a piece that was thrust into my hand during the debate from an unknown quarter—in fact, a known quarter, but one to which I am not allowed to refer. The piece appeared in "Pensions Today" in July 1991 under the heading "New ideas from Meacher"—it takes us back a little.

Mr. Nicholas Brown (Newcastle upon Tyne, East): Good news.

Mr. Newton: The Opposition Front-Bench team do not want to comment on new ideas from Meacher, which is perhaps understandable.

The extract contained a footnote which stated:

"Messrs Meacher and Newton"—

it takes me back a bit—

"—and all MPs for that matter—will see their 9 per cent. Parliamentary Pension Scheme contribution tumble to 6 per cent. next April. High accrual rates to reflect what can be foreshortened pensionable careers, plus public sector indexing, make this a splendid bargain."

At least we have some things going for us, even if the House would like to see more being done.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved,

That this House endorses the proposals to give the trustees of the Parliamentary Contributory Pensions Fund power to provide a scheme by which Members may enhance their pensions by making additional voluntary contributions, and to appoint a provider for the scheme.

MEMBERS' PENSIONS (CONSOLIDATION)

Ordered,

That this House endorses the proposal to consolidate the regulations governing the Parliamentary Contributory Pensions Fund in one set of regulations, and to incorporate amendments to the Scheme implementing past Top Salaries Review Body recommendations and certain provisions of certain Social Security and Finance Acts.—*[Mr. Newton.]*

Sports Grounds

5.50 pm

Mr. Tom Pendry (Stalybridge and Hyde): I beg to move,

That the Football Spectators Act 1989 (Commencement No. 4) Order 1993 (S.I., 1993, No. 1690), dated 8th July 1993, be revoked.

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): I understand that with this it will be convenient to discuss at the same time the following motions:

That the Football Spectators (Designation of Football Matches in England and Wales) Order 1993 (S.I., 1993, No. 1691), dated 8th July 1993, be revoked.

That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that the Safety of Sports Grounds (Designation) Order 1993 (S.I., 1993, No. 2090), dated 18th August 1993, a copy of whch was laid before this House on 24th August, be annulled.

Mr. Pendry: I notice that we have a new Minister for Sport today in the form of the hon. Member for Richmond and Barnes (Mr. Hanley). It is not surprising—particularly to my hon. Friends—that we have a new Minister, as there have been so many during the past few years.

In view of my desire during the past few years to hurry the Government into bringing into force various sections of the Football Spectators Act 1989, it might be thought by hon. Members that I should be the last person to be moving motions today. However, life is seldom that simple and my right hon. and hon. Friends and I tabled the motions to have an opportunity to debate the effectiveness of the Act in the light of recent developments.

I vividly recall saying when the Taylor report was debated in the House on 30 January 1990:

"The report should be seen primarily as a catalyst for debate, not a tablet of stone."—[*Official Report,* 30 January 1990; Vol. 166, c. 237.]

I am only too happy to find that I have been proved right by the passing of time.

Since the recommendations of the Taylor report were accepted, there have been numerous advances that deserve our careful consideration. Many, though not all, supporters have reacted adversely to the proposed changes in the way they watch and enjoy their team perform. They raise many points through their respective organisations, notably the Football Supporters Association and the National Federation of Supporters Clubs, which we should take care to address on this occasion.

Encouragingly for the organisations, there have been scientific developments in the area of crowd safety since the awful tragedy at Hillsborough.

It is good to see that the Minister has now arrived. I am sure that he will be made aware of the gems which I have made known to the House during his brief absence. I realise that we all have difficulties with transport, and I am sure that the Minister has a good excuse.

It is encouraging for those supporters who have not been happy with all-seated stadiums to see that there have been scientific developments in crowd safety since the Hillsborough tragedy. The innovations were not available to Lord Justice Taylor for his consideration, so they have not been incorporated into his findings.

Opposition Members recognise that the Bradford, Heysel and Hillsborough tragedies demonstrated a problem in need of immediate attention. A sense of urgency prevailed as Lord Justice Taylor took a sensible look at the difficulties of ensuring crowd safety at football

matches, much as Lord Justice Popplewell had done before him. The tragedies at Bradford and Hillsborough and also at the grounds of Bolton and Glasgow Rangers some time before almost certainly stemmed from the 19th-century structure of football in this country and the grounds that were built then have remained with us. Hardly any of our grounds had been improved in any significant way since the last century.

It may interest the House—especially my hon. Friends—to know that the problem of safety at football grounds was first recognised and addressed by the Labour Government of 1924, who realised that significant changes needed to be made to safeguard supporters. It was clear to the Government at that time that the existing terraces needed substantial modification in terms of segregation crush barriers and the like. They went so far as to suggest that grounds should need a licence before clubs were allowed to admit spectators.

It is a great shame that 50 years, and two major accidents at Burnden park and Ibrox park, were allowed to pass before the findings of the 1924 report were fully implemented, alongside other recommendations, in the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975—again, I must say, under a Labour Government. Even had those tragedies not occurred, it would be right and proper for clubs to start looking at the safety problems of their antiquated terraces and to work on bringing them into the 20th and 21st centuries.

I know that the all-party football committee of which I was the Chairman took a responsible approach to the challenges of ensuring safety at football grounds. Both Lord Justice Popplewell and Lord Justice Taylor addressed the issues, and we gave evidence to both. Our submissions were largely accepted in their reports.

The Home Affairs Select Committee submitted its report on football hooliganism in February 1991, and the Committee also did sterling work by contributing positively to the debate. Hon. Members who served on the Committee deserve due recognition for their recommendations.

However, even at that time we were concerned that all-seater stadiums might not be the single and complete answer to the problems of safety, hooliganism or even comfort. As early as 1984, a study carried out by the sociology department of Leicester university revealed serious deficiencies in the theory of all-seated stadiums. The clubs themselves have experienced many practical difficulties when trying to change to all-seater stadiums. The House may remember that Coventry City was one of the first clubs to convert to all-seated as early as 1981, but quickly reconverted when fans started to stand on the seats and even tear them up.

Last season, Manchester City built a new all-seater stand at the ground's Platt lane end. The club then found that pitch invasions were being lead by fans from the new stand on the day of its opening.

I know that, if my hon. Friend the Member for Wakefield (Mr. Hinchliffe) had been here—I know that he had to go to his constituency—he would have intervened at this point to make a point about rugby. My hon. Friend acquired a copy of a disorder report following the Great Britain *v.* New Zealand rugby league match on 16 October. I believe that the Minister was there. The attendance was 36,131. There were no arrests inside the ground, and no ejections from the ground. There were 70 police on duty, and the report states that outside the ground one person was arrested and was cautioned. The police inspector in charge at the ground commented that the fans had been absolutely marvellous, and he wished that all fans could be like that. He added that he could see the day when it would not be necessary to police rugby league events inside the ground.

Some soccer fans could learn from the behaviour of their counterparts who go to rugby matches. I am sure that my hon. Friend would have wanted to make that point. I may not have made it as eloquently as he would have, but I am pleased to put the point on record.

For an explanation of the changes to all-seater stadiums have failed to eradicate the unruly elements within a football crowd, we need look no further than the words of Sir Bert Millichip, the chairman of the Football Association who gave evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee:

"experience has taught us that a person can be just as big a hooligan when he is sitting down as when he is standing up."

Many clubs have found that their plans to convert to all-seated stadiums have not found favour with many of their fans. I want to illustrate the supporters' view and to do so I would like to quote from a letter by David Woolf, a Liverpool supporter. His was only one of the many letters which I have received on the subject. He said:

"The Government has accepted the fact that standing can be safe, but why for only lower league clubs and not the higher?"

That is a point of view which I do not necessarily share.

It is to the eternal credit of the right hon. Member for Putney that, when he was Secretary of State for National Heritage, accepted and acted upon submissions that were given to him verbally and in written form on 11 May 1992 by the all-party football committee delegation. We were able to convince him of the wisdom of exempting third and fourth division clubs from the all-seater requirements of Lord Justice Taylor's report. I hope that the Minister has brought an open mind to the debate and is prepared to consider sensible suggestions on their own merit in the light of changing circumstances.

Finally in this context, I should like to recall a remark made by Lord Justice Taylor:

"There is no panacea which will achieve total safety and cure all the problems of behaviour and crowd control."

No one could disagree with that. I believe that the football culture of standing should not be dismissed outright. On the other hand, more and more soccer fans are getting used to sitting and would not want to revert to watching games from standing areas. We would therefore expect a small proportion only of any ground to comprise standing areas.

Recent developments in crowd safety technology, however, mean that we should reconsider our earlier decision to encourage leading clubs to change over entirely to all-seater stadiums. I firmly believe that, in the light of new developments, supporters should be given the opportunity to stand in new, safer areas. They could be given the choice between standing and sitting without detriment to their safety.

Those of us who understand football acknowledge that UEFA and FIFA currently oppose standing areas for much the same reasons as those expressed in the Taylor report; and that that might mean closing certain parts of grounds that are involved in a few international matches, until those bodies are convinced of the safety of standing areas.

The UEFA and FIFA rulings, like the Taylor report, were a direct result of the events of the 1980s. After the crowd tragedy at Hillsborough, scientists at the National Nuclear Corporation Ltd. research establishment at Risley set about creating a system for monitoring crowd pressure.

[Mr. Pendry]

The system that they developed comprises a network of pressure monitors strategically placed in tunnels, barriers and fences. The sensors are linked to a central bank of monitor screens, and changing colours on the screens will warn the attendants, police and stewards of any change in crowd pressures. They will then be able to take the necessary action.

I have been to see the system and I was impressed with it. The effective use of such a system, combined with intelligent design and rigorous stewarding, should enable clubs to ensure the safety of supporters in a terraced stand. These developments aroused

"a great deal of interest from the delegates at the international conference on engineering for crowd safety",

according to Professor Smith, head of Sheffield university's engineering department. Paul Wertheimer of a company called Crowd Management Strategies in the United States, recognised as one of the world's experts in crowd safety matters, has also approved the system, and he has said:

"The British are world leaders in the field of crowd safety."

The Metropolitan police used the system at last year's new year's eve festivities, when it helped to save a number of people from serious crush-related injuries. The police were able to detect a build-up of pressure against certain crash barriers and took immediate action, possibly averting the tragic loss of life that has happened before. I hope that the system will begin to prove its worth, as the Metropolitan police will be using it again this year to protect revellers from the danger of injury.

Perhaps more importantly still, the Football Licensing Authority has also visited the NNC and agrees that the system would almost certainly have prevented the Hillsborough disaster. My own club, Derby County, and Blackpool football club have expressed an interest in the system, and executives from the two clubs are due to attend a demonstration of the system soon.

Mr. Menzies Campbell (Fife, North-East): I am interested in the line that the hon. Gentleman is pursuing. What would such a system cost? Would it cost so much that the clubs could not generate the money themselves? Or would they perhaps have to look to outside agencies for assistance?

Mr. Pendry: I do not have the exact figures to hand, but I can tell the hon. and learned Gentleman that it is less costly to include the system in a new stand than to convert a stand that already has seated accommodation. I hope that funds will be available to help clubs that have already put in seats and which would naturally be upset if they had to change again. Perhaps such funds could come from the Football Trust or the national lottery when it comes on stream—but I will send the details to the hon. and learned Gentleman.

When he was Secretary of State for National Heritage, the right hon. and learned Member for Putney (Mr. Mellor) accepted an invitation to attend a demonstration at the NNC, as did the former Minister for Sport, the hon. Member for Salisbury (Mr. Key). Unfortunately, neither of them managed to attend the demonstration, largely owing to the brevity of their stays at the Department. Now that the Under-Secretary of State has his feet firmly under the table —I am sure that he hopes to keep them there for some time —I trust that he will pick up where his predecessors left off and accept an invitation to visit the NNC facilities at Risley. On behalf of those at Risley, I gladly extend to him an invitation to do that.

Out of the Hillsborough disaster there has emerged a new industry building good modern stadiums that are designed for comfort and safety, with refreshment areas, creches and the capacity to hold community activities all year round, not just for a few hours on a Saturday afternoon. I have spoken to a number of such firms, including Superstadia Ltd., a stadium designer and builder. It assured me that it was capable of incorporating systems like the one developed by the NNC in such a way as to create a new generation of safe standing areas.

We are all nevertheless aware that good stadium design alone is not enough to ensure the safety of crowds at large sporting events. Both the Taylor and the Popplewell reports highlighted the fact that effective stewarding and policing play a vital part in safety procedures at matches. The Taylor report states that a chain of command must be clearly defined for each ground. At the "Safety In Numbers" conference in August 1992, the chain of command was still not made clear; safety officers were assured that they would be in charge on match day, and police commanders received the same sort of assurances.

The Under-Secretary will be aware that I was engaged in correspondence with the right hon. and learned Member for Putney on this subject and that I sought clarification on it several times. In my letter to him of 16 September 1992 I pointed out the importance of intelligent action by the Government, to allow clubs to use stewards and police in the most effective way to ensure the safety and well-being of supporters.

Following my letter, the assistant chief constable of Greater Manchester, Mr. Malcolm George, undertook an examination of the respective roles of stewards and the police. I hope that the Minister is in a position to tell us the outcome of that review and what guidance the Government have given to all involved in the chain of command.

Time spent debating sporting matters in this place is a valuable commodity. Following yesterday's events in Turkey, it would be easy to be sidetracked by them, to the detriment of other issues to do with our great national game. It must always be remembered that the majority of football supporters in this country are law-abiding citizens whose only wish is to follow their club or national team. They dissociate themselves from the mindless idiots who do so much damage to our reputation abroad.

I should like the genuine fan to be recognised as capable of responsibility, yet he seems to be given no place in real decision making. In the Committee that scrutinised what became the Football Spectators Act 1989, the then Under-Secretary with responsibility for sport made it clear, on 11 July, that he felt that supporters should be involved in the decision-making process—following pressure from Committee members. But little has been done since those fine words were uttered. I have consistently campaigned for supporters to be represented when changes that affect them are made. Norman Jacobs, chairman of the Footall Licensing Authority, has told me of the authority's willingness to give supporters a seat on it.

There is a problem, however, in that supporters have two official voices: the Football Supporters Association and the National Federation of Supporters Clubs. I urge those two groups to speak with one voice so that it might be heard more clearly at the highest level.

Should the statutory instrument be passed, the timetable for the implementation of the Taylor report will be firmly fixed. However, flexibility is called for with regard to the 1994 and 1997 deadlines for the completion of all-seated stadiums. I urge the Under-Secretary of State to have a thorough review of the new developments on crowd safety with a view to possibly creating safe-standing areas.

To be fair, I agree that a certain element of flexibility has already been established with the Football Licensing Authority's recognition that Birmingham City and Peterborough may have until August 1995 to complete their ground improvements, Bolton Wanderers, Stoke City and West Bromwich Albion may have until August 1996 to comply with the full demands of the safety legislation and the three clubs promoted to the first division at the end of the season may have until August 1997 to upgrade their stadiums. Derby County, Oxford, Portsmouth and Sunderland are committed to relocate their stadiums, and the Football Licensing Authority has said that it is prepared to allow them flexibility.

As a result, next season's first division could feature up to 12 clubs that will not have complied with the August 1994 deadline. The Government should show those clubs understanding on the imposition of deadlines. After all, the FLA should have come into being on 1 June 1990, but in reality was able to begin inspecting grounds only at the beginning of the 1991-92 season, after appointing safety officers in the spring of 1991.

Many of the difficulties that clubs are experiencing relate to problems with financing, as the Under-Secretary of State knows, with planning departments and even with the Department of the Environment, to say nothing of the Home Office. It is only right that clubs are afforded a degree of flexibility commensurate with planning and financial problems and I hope that the Minister will take that on board.

The clubs' commitment to improving their stadiums is on-going, but there is a financial limit to what some clubs can achieve. First division clubs do not generally have the same level of income as those in the FA premier league. The valuable contributions that are made by the Football Trust, helped by the Government's decision to extend the reduction in pool betting duty, are greatly appreciated by the clubs, but each club still has to find a substantial amount of money to finance its ground improvements programme. The same flexibility should also be extended to address the problems of clubs wishing to develop safe-standing areas, once it is established that is precisely what they will be.

I hope that the Minister will recognise that in bringing the motions before the House my right hon. and hon. Friends and I have done a service to football. As long as the Minister is equally constructive in his reply, I shall not proceed to ask my right hon. and hon. Friends to divide the House.

6.15 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for National Heritage (Mr. Ian Sproat): May I begin by apologising to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and to the House for being two minutes late for the debate. At least two hon. Members present—the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde (Mr. Pendry) and the hon. and learned Member for Fife, North-East (Mr. Campbell)—will welcome my reason. I was downstairs in the small ministerial conference room with a group of students who had come to speak about keeping Wednesday afternoons free for sport.

I saw the name of the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde appear on the monitor—I had not been expecting the debate to begin until considerably later—and I ran out of that room telling the students that I was 100 per cent. behind their determination to keep Wednesday afternoons free for sport and to ensure that any change in examination times as a result of semesterisation, or whatever the word may be—that Wednesday afternoon problem writ large—does not detract from the essential nature of having a regular, known, fixed, free time for playing competitive games at universities and to retain the tradition of free Wednesday afternoons.

I have had one helpful meeting on that subject with the Minister at the Department of Education and as the Minister for Sport I am determined to do everything to ensure that Wednesday afternoons remain free.

I hope that with those few words of apology hon. Members on both sides of the House will feel that those two minutes were not wholly wasted. I thank the Opposition for tabling the prayer. Perhaps it is slightly unusual gratitude as it is contrary to the Government's statutory instrument, but the purpose of the prayer, as I take it, is to give us a chance to discuss the extremely important subject of safety at football grounds.

I also thank the usual channels, so well represented by my hon. Friend the Member for Stevenage (Mr. Wood) in allowing the debate today as I was disappointed that the turmoil yesterday prevented the debate occurring.

I am sure that the House will agree that our discussions today are timely, given the proximity of the August 1994 deadline for all seating at football grounds in the Premier League and first division, and the strenuous efforts that have been made to improve safety over the past two or three years by clubs, local authorities, the police and the Football Licensing Authority since the Taylor report.

I begin by emphasising that the primary objective underlying all the Government's policies has been to ensure that we never again see the appalling scenes witnessed at Ibrox in 1971, where 66 people tragically died; at Bradford in 1985, where 56 people tragically died; and at Hillsborough in 1989, where 96 people tragically died. The Government and those who run football have a moral duty to do everything in their power to ensure that such disasters are never repeated. I am grateful for the opportunity to demonstrate the Government's continuing commitment to that task.

This important subject has a complex history, so it may be useful if I remind the House of the framework for sports ground safety policy, which provides a balanced and appropriate response to the problems associated with ensuring reasonable safety of the public at sports events.

After the Ibrox disaster of 1971 and the subsequent inquiry by Lord Wheatley, the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 was passed that introduced safety certification by local authorities for grounds with accommodation for 10,000 or more spectators at which football, rugby or cricket is played. The specific technical requirements relating to safety standards at sports grounds were first published in 1972, in the Government's guide to safety at sports grounds.

That "green guide", as it is known, was and still is the chief source of information available for use by local authorities in drawing up the conditions of safety

[Mr. Ian Sproat]

certificates. It plays a central role in ensuring sports ground safety. Revised editions of the guide were published following the Bradford and Hillsborough disasters, in consultation with local authorities associations and others.

Some have suggested that the advice contained in the guide should be mandatory. We considered that argument carefully, but on balance disagreed. The guide should provide guidance and should act as an aid to rather than substitute for professional judgment and commonsense. There must be discretion to allow for the variations that exist across the 90 or so Football League grounds, not to mention in other leagues and in Scotland.

Of course, the green guide applies not only to football grounds but to all sports grounds, regardless of their size and the sport played. I shall come to the important point that the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde made about Wakefield Rugby League.

The task of the certifying authority, acting on the advice of the police, fire and ambulance services and other relevant bodies gathered together in a safety advisory group, is to determine how many spectators may safely be admitted to a ground, taking into account not merely its physical structure, but the club's systems and procedures. Its mechanism for doing that is the safety certificate.

The emphasis is very much on the safety advisory group working as a team to determine what constitutes reasonable safety. However, the ultimate responsibility for safety rests not with the local authority or the police but with the club itself. Later, I shall deal with some of the issues that have been raised in the debate.

Following the fire at Bradford in 1985 and the subsequent inquiry by Lord Justice Popplewell, the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 modified the 1975 Act and established a parallel system of safety certification for any stand at any sports ground with accommodation for 500 or more spectators.

The Football Spectators Act 1989, which followed the Heysel tragedy, created the Football Licensing Authority. The authority is charged with operating a licensing scheme for grounds at which designated matches are played, and also with keeping under review the discharge by local authorities of their functions under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 that I have already mentioned.

After the publication of Lord Justice Taylor's report into the Hillsborough disaster, the Football Licensing Authority was also charged with advising the Government on the introduction of all-seater accommodation at Football League grounds and the national stadiums. Following the Government's review last year of the all-seater policy, the authority was also charged with ensuring that any terracing retained by second and third division clubs of the Football League meets the necessary safety standards.

Together, these measures are intended to ensure that spectators at sports events, and in particular those attending football matches, receive the highest standards of safety to which they are surely entitled. They ensure that the needs of safety and security do not get out of balance, as they did at Hillsborough, and that there is no confusion about who is responsible for safety. They also ensure that football clubs themselves accept their responsibility for safety within their grounds and develop a safety culture that permeates their entire thinking right up to boardroom level.

The three statutory instruments form an integral part of this comprehensive legislative programme. Therefore, I shall make clear the purpose of the three orders that have been brought into force. As the House is aware, one was brought into force under the Safety of Sports Ground Act 1975, and the other two under the Football Spectators Act 1989. All three are essentially tidying-up measures.

Under section 1(1) of the Safety of Sports Grounds 1975 Act, the Secretary of State may designate as requiring a safety certificate issued by the local authority any sports ground with accommodation for more than 10,000 spectators at which football, rugby or cricket is played. Statutory instrument No. 2090 simply designates for that purpose the grounds of three Football League clubs—Millwall, Walsall and Wickham—which have recently relocated. It also removes from the list of designated grounds their former venues, which have been demolished.

Statutory instrument No. 1690 brought into force on 1 August this year section 9 of the Football Spectators Act 1989. This makes it an offence to admit spectators to watch a football match designated under the Act unless the premises where the match is played are licensed by the Football Licensing Authority. The aim of the licensing system is to ensure that clubs meet the Government's August 1994 deadline for all-seater accommodation at Premier League and first division football grounds.

Although the all-seater deadline is August 1994, the Government and the licensing authority shared the view that the introduction of licensing without conditions in 1993 would allow any problems with the process to be ironed out prior to the deadline, and would provide a signal of the Government's resolve on this issue.

Statutory instrument No. 1691 is also made under the 1989 Act with the purpose of amending the definition of a designated football match. Under section 10 of the Football Spectators Act 1989, the Football Licensing Authority is charged with issuing licences to admit spectators to any premises for the purpose of watching any designated football match that is played there. The authority is also charged under section 13 of the 1989 Act with keeping under review the discharge by local authorities of their safety certification functions under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 in relation to a sports ground at which designated football matches are played.

The order revokes the original definition of a designated football match contained in statutory instrument No. 731, 1990, and substitutes a simpler one. As the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde (Mr. Pendry) knows, the new definition excludes, for example, the more than 30 non-league grounds which, although designated as grounds requiring safety certificates under the 1975 Act, do not require the involvement of the Football Licensing Authority.

Therefore, the new definition is to be drawn tighter to catch only those football matches played at Premier League and Football League grounds. Consequently, the Football Licensing Authority is able to concentrate on those grounds to which the Government's post-Taylor safety policies apply.

The hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde opened the debate rightly and understandably focused on the Government's requirement that football clubs in the Premier League and the first division should have all-seater stadiums by August 1994, or by three years after they are promoted to the first division, whichever is later.

As the House knows, the all-seater policy underwent comprehensive review in 1992. Interested organisations, including the football authorities, the police and supporters' groups, were consulted on a number of issues, one of which was the possibility of applying the all-seater policy according to average attendances or ground capacities. As the House will recall, following the review, the Government decided that, to focus resources more effectively on the area of greatest need, clubs in what are now the second and third divisions would be permitted to retain some terracing, provided it was safe.

Throughout Europe and much of the world, the benefits of all-seater stadiums are widely accepted. European football's ruling body, UEFA, has recently decided that grounds staging matches in the European championships and the three European club competitions must be all-seater by 1998. Already, all high-risk matches in continental Europe can be played only in front of all-seater crowds. Italy already has an all-seater legacy from the 1990 World cup, France is working towards UEFA's deadline as host for the 1998 World cup, and in Holland, premier division grounds must be all-seater by 1997.

The world football body, FIFA, banned terracing for the World cup finals in 1980 and for all qualifying rounds from 1992. Outside soccer, the Rugby Union grounds at Twickenham and Murrayfield will shortly be all-seater too.

I shall now deal with the issue of enforcing through the FLA all-seater stadiums. The mechanism for achieving that will be the licence granted by the Football Licensing Authority. The hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde properly spoke about clubs that may seek an extension to the deadline. The majority of clubs required to meet the deadline have either done so already or will do so very soon. However, I recognise that a minority of clubs face problems in meeting the deadline. I note that my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) is dutifully in his place. No doubt he will wish to speak about these matters.

I assure the House that, in the course of the present season, the FLA will consult those clubs and their local authorities. On the basis of those consultations, it will recommend to the Government on a case-by-case basis whether an extension should be granted. It is possible that some strong arguments for extra time could be put by one or two clubs that are engaged in relocating to new sites, but the FLA has made it clear that it cannot consider requests for relaxation of the all-seater requirement unless it has clear evidence that the exemption will be for a strictly limited period, and that the club can realistically complete its relocation within a reasonable and definite time scale.

I recognise that some clubs may have encountered difficulties in obtaining planning permission, either for relocation or for the redevelopment of their existing grounds. In anticipation of that, the Department of the Environment issued advice to local planning authorities in the form of planning policy guidance note No. 17 in 1991. However, the onus must be on the clubs themselves to develop realistic proposals in consultation with their local authorities. When the club and the local authority are in harness, the results can be spectacular. For example, the new stadium at Millwall went from concept to reality in less than two years.

I know that many hon. Members are concerned about the cost, to which the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde referred, of implementing the all-seater policy. I remind the House of the considerable assistance provided by the Government through the Football Trust and arising from the Chancellor's decision in 1990 to reduce the pools betting duty from 42·5 to 40 per cent. for a period of five years.

Around £20 million each year has been provided for soccer as a result of that concession. In March 1992, the Government announced that they would consider favourably the case for extending the concession for a further five years, provided that the football authorities and the clubs demonstrated that they would find a substantial share of the full costs. As hon. Members will recall, following a careful assessment of progress made to date and the nature of the work still required to be completed, the Government announced on 4 August this year that the concessions will be extended for a further five years—that is, until the year 2000.

The hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde raised extremely important detailed points about Risley and the report from the Association of Chief Police Officers. If it is for the convenience of the House, I will answer those points when other hon. Members have had a chance to speak, and then I can draw all the matters of detail together. I hope that, in my opening remarks, I have made clear the complexity of the history of this important subject, the purpose of the statutory instruments and the seriousness with which the Government take the matter.

6.30 pm

Mr. Menzies Campbell (Fife, North-East): As the Minister said, he missed the kick-off, but only by a moment or two and he has a perfectly sound excuse for doing so. He told the House that he had been engaged in discussion as to how the traditional Wednesday afternoons in universities and institutions of higher learning can be preserved for sporting purposes. With the hon. Members for Stalybridge and Hyde (Mr. Pendry) and for Falmouth and Camborne (Mr. Coe), I visited the Minister earlier this year and took part in an extremely constructive discussion. He encouraged me and, I am sure, the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde by the positive response that he gave then and has done so again by his positive response this afternoon.

It is a long way from the days of the Football Spectators Bill. If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you had the honour and privilege of chairing the Committee that considered that Bill. I well remember the intemperate language in which some of the exchanges in that Committee were couched. I see that the hon. Member for Ryedale (Mr. Greenway), who is also a survivor of that Committee, is here. It is a measure of how far we have come since then that we can exchange observations on those matters in such a sober and civilised way. There was something of a frantic atmosphere at that stage, some of it engendered by anxiety over Hillsborough.

I also recall that Lord Justice Taylor's report arrived as a breath of sound common sense. Some hon. Members may remember that it was his response to the idea of identity cards for football supporters that was probably the most persuasive factor in convincing the Government that they should abandon that proposal. That showed a measure of sound common sense, to which I hope that they will continue to adhere.

In the matter of all-seater stadiums, I support the view expressed by the Minister rather than that expressed by the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde. However, if, as he

[Mr. Menzies Campbell]

tells us, the technology has advanced, it would be only right and proper to consider the extent to which that has occurred. My only difficulty is that, as the Minister said, many clubs have already gone down that road and there might be problems if that process were put into reverse. Therefore, I suspect that, even if the technology is available in the terms being discussed, it might be something of an obstruction if we were to give too much credence to it. I have an open mind on the matter—I would not want the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde to think that my mind was closed. However, I am a supporter of all-seater stadiums.

The Government were right, and sensible, to take the view that they did on what used to be called the third and fourth divisions of the football league. The Minister spoke of clubs in the Premiership and first division which may not yet have achieved the necessary standards. I hope that he will encourage the Football Licensing Authority to be realistic in its approach. It would be easy for it to be unnecessarily rigid and draconian. Such an approach is bound to appeal to the mind of a licensing authority because the purpose of all this is to provide for safety. We should never forget that the safety of spectators is fundamental. If achieving safety means changing the culture of the game slightly, that is a price that I would be willing to pay.

Lord Justice Taylor's report provided a substantial blueprint for the way in which the game might develop. In particular, it is a pity that his trenchant observations about the attitude of the football authorities towards the fans have not been taken up rather more forcefully. As the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde pointed out, there are two national bodies and it might be for the benefit of football supporters and spectators if they came together and created one national federation, speaking with one voice.

The role of the spectator and the supporter is not yet one to which the football authorities give sufficient regard. If one is anxious to change the culture so that, for example, reports such as that about the rugby league match—to which reference has been made—could be made about football, that would best be done through the football supporters association. It is a matter of culture. Rugby league remains a sport firmly rooted in the culture of those who support it and are interested in it, in just the way that football is. The fans still sing "Abide with me" at rugby league finals, but one would not dare to sing it at the football cup final when, 40 or 50 years ago, it was as much a part of the proceedings as anything else.

Mr. John Fraser (Norwood): It still is.

Mr. Campbell: I am delighted to hear that. I had understood that it had to be dropped because, on occasion, the nature of the participation in it was not particularly religious. If I am wrong, I am delighted to hear that.

Mr. Pendry: Do they not sing it in Scotland?

Mr. Campbell: No. They have not started to sing it at the Scottish cup final and it may be some time before they begin to do so. They are more interested in singing "Flower of Scotland".

Sir Peter Emery (Honiton): It might be better if they did.

Mr. Campbell: If the right hon. Gentleman is making a comment about Scottish fans, he should realise that it has become a matter of pride among Scottish fans going abroad that they behave themselves. Andy Roxburgh, the recently retired manager of the Scottish team, had a lot to do with that. He created a relationship between the team and the supporters who went abroad. The supporters were proud of going abroad and anxious to show that they could behave themselves when they did.

There has been a substantial improvement in football. It has become more of a family activity, more women go to matches and family enclosures have become part and parcel of the facilities at many grounds. In that sense, there has been a substantial improvement in the past five or 10 years, but there is more to be done. In a week when people have been arrested when allegedly supporting Manchester United abroad, we must realise that more needs to be done about that problem. I doubt whether it makes much difference to the reputation of the United Kingdom abroad, but such activity upsets the attitude of the ordinary law-abiding supporter who is unhappy about being described as a hooligan and being tarred with the same brush.

The honest, law-abiding supporter is therefore as much the victim of the activity of a few hooligans as is the game. We should do everything in our power to ensure that those whose interest is not in the game but in the amount of trouble and mayhem that they can create off the back of the game are dissuaded from supporting it.

This is a substantial issue of culture. I was thinking, as the debate unfolded, that there was terracing at Murrayfield for a long time and it was somewhere that one could go quite reasonably and in a relaxed fashion. However, a stage arose at which, as a result of the amount of drink that was being consumed outside and brought into the stadium, it became extremely uncomfortable to stand on the terracing at Murrayfield. The legislation that had the effect of banning the taking of alcohol into the ground had a remarkable impact upon behaviour. The difference was extraordinary.

Murrayfield has moved on to be an all-seater stadium. It has not been completed in time for the visit of the All Blacks in a fortnight or so, but in due course it will be an all-seater stadium. That seems to be an ideal towards which we should persuade football clubs to aim. Therefore, although I understand that the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde is anxious to allow for the possibility of standing, using new technology, I feel that the game will best be secured, and especially will more easily become a focus for families, if we continue to move as firmly as we have in the past to all-seater stadiums.

More has to be done in the interests of the ordinary football supporter. The Government can encourage that, but only the football authorities and the clubs can bring it about. If we give that encouragement here in the House by our support for measures which have the effect of giving a better deal to the supporter, I suspect that we shall do as much for the game as any piece of legislation can.

6.41 pm

Mr. John Greenway (Ryedale): I must first apologise to the House for having missed the kick-off of the debate. It has been rather difficult in the past 24 hours to form a judgment as to precisely when this match would take place. While the attendance is rather thin, and perhaps more in

keeping with what we might regard as a reserve fixture, the quality of what I have heard—and I hope the quality of the rest of the debate—will make up for the thin attendance.

I thank the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde (Mr. Pendry) for giving the House the opportunity to discuss these matters, albeit in trying to negative what the Government have decided. Nevertheless, we do not get the chance to discuss football in the House as often as perhaps we should.

I must remind the House of my interest as the president of York City football club. Had the debate been timed four or five weeks ago, I might have been tempted to suggest that York City would be one of those clubs that might be facing the difficulty of moving from the second division to the first division at the end of the season because at that time we were about fourth equal in the second division, since when we have lost about four times on the trot and I do not think that we even scored a goal. Who knows; we might still be faced with the embarrassment of needing to consider how we should move to an all-seater stadium.

It would be difficult for us to achieve that, and it would be extremely expensive. None the less I think that, on balance, after the two or three years that we have spent arguing and discussing the issue, we have probably got it about right in saying that the Premier League and the first division clubs should have all-seater grounds, but that, in the second and third divisions, it makes sense to have standing available, certainly for the foreseeable future of the next five to 10 years. A great deal of money is needed to improve grounds throughout the country in all four divisions.

The one thing that appeals to me about all-seater grounds, especially for the bigger clubs where we have bigger crowds, is the resulting improvement in crowd control. When the Home Affairs Select Committee considered the policing of football hooliganism, it came across strongly that troublemakers, standing in mass terracing, can easily move around and incite others to commit offences and cause trouble. It is much more difficult to achieve that if everyone has to sit down.

If any of us took the trouble to sit in the police control room at some of our big grounds we would notice the difference now. I think especially of Arsenal. I remember taking my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster, North (Sir J. Wheeler) to Arsenal when there were a lot of fans standing on the terraces behind the goals at both ends of the pitch. I think that it was a game against Sunderland. There was not a huge number of arrests; there was not a lot of trouble, but the pre-emptive policing enabled the police to stop the trouble.

The fact that these lads were able to move around was the real difficulty. Now that they have to pay £12 to £15 for a seat, they sit down and behave themselves. Although it is regrettable that some youngsters find it difficult to afford to get to matches quite as often—we are certainly noticing that in the gates at soccer grounds—we have successfully policed some of the trouble out by price and by making the fans feel much more part of the club, as the hon. and learned Member for Fife, North-East (Mr. Campbell) said.

I make one other point regarding Arsenal football club. The difficulty with all-seater stadiums is how we segregate crowds when on match days people turn up at a big ground without a ticket and buy one off a tout. We have to tackle that problem. At Arsenal, because they could see that difficulty, they devised a scheme with the police at Highbury so that the tickets said that they may not be resold without the express permission of Arsenal football club and that the football club had the right to refuse admission or to eject someone from the ground if the condition was breached.

On the first day, the police observed what was going on, they stopped some touts and told them that they believed that in selling the tickets without the permission of Arsenal football club the touts were committing the offence of deception under the Theft Act 1968. They have subsequently, on successive Saturdays, made arrests and that matter now rests with the Crown Prosecution Service.

Mr. Campbell: The hon. Gentleman may know that ticket touting is a subject about which I have been concerned for some time. Does he recall that the Taylor report expressly recommended that a criminal offence of ticket touting, I think within the environs of a ground within 12 hours before the kick-off, should be made a specific criminal offence?

Mr. Greenway: That is exactly right. I was coming to that in a second. I just want to finish off the point about Arsenal. I do not believe that it is for the House and for hon. Members, with the benefit of the privilege that we have on the Floor of the House, to put unnecessary pressure on the Crown Prosecution Service. I see that my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General is sitting on the Front Bench, which is extremely convenient. Were the arrangement that Arsenal and the police in north London have devised found to be satisfactory, it might avoid the need to have the type of ticket tout legislation which I know some hon. Members on both sides of the House think would create more difficulties than it would solve. I encourage the Minister to take an interest in the point and to see whether we cannot ensure that there is a prosecution.

It must be in the public interest to find out whether what Arsenal devised would actually work. It is extremely straightforward. If someone buys a ticket which states that it cannot be sold to anyone else without the express permission of the football club, and if the ticket is then sold on, it is quite clear that whoever buys it is not guaranteed entry to the ground. It is a deception and that principle should be tried and heard in a court of law.

Mr. Pendry: I have been following the hon. Gentleman. It was not just Lord Justice Taylor, but the Home Affairs Select Committee of which the hon. Gentleman was a member, made four recommendations in relation to legislation, three of which were accepted by the Government—racist or obscene shouting, throwing missiles and invasion of pitch.

The one recommendation that the Government have not enacted applies to ticket touting. I have asked the Prime Minister on a number of occasions when he planned to do something about it and he said that he would when parliamentary time allowed.

I hope that the Minister will take on board what the hon. Gentleman is saying. Whether it takes the form of the Arsenal scheme or some other, the Government should address such an important problem.

Mr. Greenway: Both Opposition Members have made the point that there have been numerous recommendations that ticket touting should be abolished. I would simply say to my hon. Friend that a reasonable quid pro quo for the Premier League and first division clubs taking the initiative

[Mr. Greenway]

and grasping the nettle and making the grounds all-seater, should be the recognition that this creates a problem with segregation.

The ticket touts are an absolute menace. They are telling people outside Finsbury Park tube station, "This game is sold out and you cannot get a ticket," yet there will be 4,000, 5,000 or 6,000 tickets on sale at the football ground on the day of the match. It has to be stopped. It certainly will not help to ensure the safety, comfort and peaceable enjoyment of a football match by other spectators if, because of the lack of segregation caused by this problem, we see violence erupting in our stands. That is not what we want.

Sir Peter Emery (Honiton): Given the agreement across the Floor of the House, even if the Government take no action, we are coming up to the stage when new private Member's legislation will be introduced, and such a measure would fit very well into a private Member's Bill.

Mr. Greenway: Perhaps one or two of us who have an interest in these matters might be fortunate enough to come high enough in the private Members' ballot.

If the arrangement which Arsenal has made with the police were properly tested in a court of law and found to be satisfactory, we might find a way of dealing with touts without having to create more public order offences, as a complete ban on ticket touts might envisage.

I shall not take up too much time, but it is important that we keep faith with clubs which have taken the initiative on the all-seater issue and responded to the Government's decision.

I have been to two or three all-seater grounds this season. They are absolutely marvellous and the fans appreciate that they can enjoy the game in much greater comfort than in the past. In time, supporters will get used to the fact that they have to sit down and not stand up.

Finally, let me move on to the second and third division clubs. There is a danger that, in concentrating on making the Premier League and first division club grounds all-seater in such a relatively short time, we could be lulled into thinking that the need for significant resources to improve soccer grounds is at an end. That is not the case. My regular Saturday afternoon with York City involves going to the poorer places. We need to spend many hundreds of millions of pounds improving those grounds. The clubs already find it extremely difficult to make ends meet even without incurring capital expenditure on building new stands.

I shall make two final points. My hon. Friend may not like this, but we have to be aware of the potential effects of the lottery on pools income. Without the Football Trust, we could not have paid for all the improvements to the smaller grounds.

Let me talk for a moment about York City. One of our players, David Longhurst, died on the pitch. We launched an appeal for a new stand in his name. Basically, it is a roof over the popular end of the ground, which has made a huge difference to supporters. We could not have done that without a significant contribution from the Football Trust. We have just built a new family stand in front of half the main stand and we would like to build in front of the other half. York City football club cannot do it without the help of the trust. There are many more clubs in a similar position, so I urge my hon. Friend to ensure that resources will continue to be available to make improvements.

As I go round the country watching football, I detect a new spirit within the game. It is sad that our national English side has not performed as well as we would have liked and, barring a miracle, is unlikely to play in the World cup. That is one headline which makes the future of football look less certain. Let me assure my hon. Friend that there is a good spirit throughout the game and improvements are being made. We need to continue to be flexible and ensure that the Football Licensing Authority responds to the individual needs of clubs.

I am quite convinced that with the good will and the continuing support of the Government and both sides of the House we shall see our national game move into a bright future through the rest of this century and into the next one.

6.56 pm

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): Before we go ahead with the orders and consider all the bright plans for new subsidies—like the ones to the farmers—for the clubs, registers of ticket touts and identity cards for everyone, we should ensure that the regulations take account of the real problems of real clubs.

At a rather bleak time for English football, I want to mention Southend United football club. It is a rather remarkable club. When I became the Member of Parliament for Southend some 13 years ago, the club was at the bottom of the fourth division. Now it is near the top of the first division and likely to be in the Premier League next year. It is a remarkable success story. I am not claiming personal credit for it in any way, although I attend games regularly.

It is run not by a crowd of rascals, but by super people. Vic Jobson, the chairman, not only runs a good football club in a businesslike way; he also ensures that the club pays huge attention to its social obligations. A social club for young people in Southend has been established off Eastern avenue to give them the advantage of playing football and other sports.

Only last week, we heard of the club's plan to take over the Kursaal in Southend, which used to be a great social centre. They are going to make it a drug-free area. It is a good club run by exciting people. It has had fantastic success.

However, Southend United football club has had plans for many years to build a super new stadium instead of the present Roots Hall stadium in the centre of the town. The club has been desperately anxious to do it, but has not been able to go ahead.

First, it sought permission for a new ground at Southend airport where there is plenty of land, but, as the Minister is well aware, since, like me, he has moved to the south of England, unfortunately everybody objects to everything. If there is the possibility of a car or anything that might take an extra pound off the value of a house or the slightest possibility of any inconvenience, people want to oppose it.

There was massive opposition to the airport development, so Southend United suggested Eastern avenue, a nice open place not far from my own home. It would be an ideal place for a new stadium and linked sports facilities for the whole community. That attracted objections from some people.

Southend borough council had an exciting new plan from developers to build a supermarket. We have many other supermarkets in Southend, but the council offered a planning gain of some exciting facilities nearby. Unfortunately, that did not happen. In desperation, the club then asked the local community, the Football League and everybody else, including the Minister, "We want to build a new stadium, but is there anywhere in the world that we can build it?"

Happily, after a great deal of discussion it was put to the club that there was a lovely site in Sutton road, next to the cemetery and an industrial site. Rather reluctantly, the club agreed to spend a great deal of money building what it wanted to be an exciting new ground. Unfortunately, as the Minister is well aware, the site is also next to a place called Rochford—another delightful residential area near Southend. Yet again, everyone objected for all sorts of reasons—including a local farmer who thought that there might be a possibility of making more money from having a new road constructed through the area. One of the most interesting aspects of life in Southend is how the farmers—a group whom my hon. Friend the Member for Ryedale (Mr. Greenway) represents so enthusiastically—appear to be so interested in new road developments.

That plan for the club went down the chute and, again in desperation—and despite its deep commitment to Southend and its huge support there—the club thought about going to a place called Basildon, which is not far from Southend. As we know, Basildon is a rather unusual place in many respects—but a rather lovely place, too. It is represented by a Conservative Member of Parliament. The club entered into long discussions, but, sad to say, it appeared that Basildon did not want it.

Southend's present ground is rather unusual—it is built on an old rubbish dump, which makes matters rather difficult. The stand in which I sit tends to sink about 3 in every year. While we are waiting to proceed with a new ground, bright ideas keep coming from the Minister, who says that the club has to do lots of things. We already have the stand where I tend to sit and also a new stand—built at huge expense—for families so that wives and children can happily attend matches. There are also a large number of new facilities. Each new entrance that has to be built because of the Taylor report causes great anxiety. There is also a small area where people can stand.

I must tell my hon. Friend the Minister that, in introducing all the bright new regulations saying that clubs have to do such and such by a certain time, he should remember that some clubs that are successful, vigorous, enthusiastic and have the support of the local community find doing those things impossible. What do they do if they cannot do those things? What do we do with a club that says, "We have tried everything. We are even prepared to go to Basildon, which is quite something, but we cannot get permission to go. What are we meant to do?" The Government are telling it to spend more and more money on its present site, which is on top of a rubbish dump. That is very sad.

My second point, which is very important, is to question why my hon. Friend the Minister says that we cannot provide a space for people to stand. I do not understand it. We hear about alleged safety considerations, but, having studied reports of the great disasters, I very much doubt whether standing facilities would create a special problem. The facility could be provided within the safety considerations. Safety men are posted at almost every part of the ground.

Because of the Taylor report, there is also a huge police force at the ground. They are delightful people, but we can scarcely move for policemen and horses. It really does not promote law and order when policemen are standing all around the ground looking into the crowd and policemen and horses are outside the ground where people park their cars. Sometimes, that is not conducive to creating what might be called the "appropriate situation". Of course, the club also has its own security staff.

Why on earth do the Government want to do away with standing room? Southend has a small area put aside for that. My boys like to go there because there is a different atmosphere and it is cheaper. Are we to make football matches a middle-class pastime for those who can afford to pay £12 or £15 a ticket? A large number of people cannot afford that much these days, so they will not go to matches.

Finally, I want to talk about the possibility of further legislation and appeal to my hon. Friend the Minister not to introduce any. We do not need new laws and new restrictions. Almost everywhere I look, new quangos, new boards, new councils and new commissions are being established. It must stop. It is the sort of action that we used to expect Labour Governments to take.

If there is to be a register of ticket touts, no doubt that will require a huge office. Officials will want to hold consultations, to fly to Europe, to employ consultants and to have photopasses for everyone. What is the point of establishing a register to stop ticket touts operating outside a football ground when they will simply go down the road and operate in the pub? New legislation would be mad.

I ask my hon. Friend the Minister not to introduce any new laws or to set up any new committees. I want him to think about the effect on some clubs that are success stories. Southend is having to spend a fortune on an old ground because it cannot move to the exciting new ground that it wants.

I know the new Minister—my hon. Friend the Member for Harwich (Mr. Sproat)—because he comes from Scotland. He is a vigorous, enthusiastic and committed politician. He likes to get things done and he has a superb reputation for integrity, vision and all the other attributes that make a good Minister. I make one minor plea to him—will he come to Southend, visit Roots Hall and meet Vic Jobson and the board? He could then also meet the wonderful players, who are some of the nicest people in the world.

There is a danger—you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, must be aware of it, because you have to listen to so many debates—that everything now involves new rules, new regulations, new boards, new commissions and people running here and there. I ask my hon. Friend to remember that football is a spectator game, which the players enjoy playing. Introducing so many new rules and regulations creates the danger that something very important could be destroyed.

I hope that my hon. Friend can give me one simple assurance. I appreciate that he has a busy timetable with a great many important meetings to attend and consultants to see. No doubt a great many civil servants want to put new ideas to him. I ask him to come to Roots Hall. I promise him that he will see a great game. He will also see some of the very serious problems that decent, respectable, successful clubs are having to face because of the crazy

[Sir Teddy Taylor]

insistence on rushing everything through by a certain date. There can be special problems. With such an excellent Minister, I hope that the Government will concentrate on having rather less regulation, fewer committees, fewer controls and more common sense.

7.6 pm

Mr. John Fraser (Norwood): I agree with the hon. Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) in one proposition, but disagree with him in another. On the question of ticket touting, there would be little disagreement throughout the country that it is infuriating when people who do not have tickets for a match are exploited by touts and often sent to the wrong part of the ground. We should not have to rely on a private Member's Bill to deal with the problem. There will be a criminal justice Bill in the next Session and it would be relatively easy to include a couple of clauses to outlaw ticket touting, in line with the recommendations that have been made.

We need to speak up for those who believe that standing at football matches is enjoyable. It is probably a losing battle, but if we can preserve a degree of standing I should welcome that, for two reasons. First, we are losing the choral capacity of the crowd. When we attend a performance of the Messiah, people do not sit down to sing the big choruses; they stand up. Without standing room at football matches, we will lose the choral capacity—the group wit—that is one of the redeeming and enjoyable parts of attending a football match.

Secondly, there is a family issue. We cannot any longer, at short notice—as I have done at Crystal Palace—get together one's sons, daughters, boyfriends and so on to attend a match when there is no standing room. With seats, one would be in one part, one in another and the two with season tickets would be together. The family atmosphere—the bringing together of people in response to a run of popularity or a highlight match—is no longer possible. I might be in the minority, but, subject to safety standards, it is my view that many people believe that standing at matches can be enjoyable, safe, worth while and family based.

7.8 pm

Mr. Sproat: A number of extremely important points have been raised in the debate, and I will do my best to cover as many as I can in the short time remaining.

First—very appropriately with you in the Chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker—is the question of rugby league, which the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde (Mr. Pendry) mentioned on behalf of the hon. Member for Wakefield (Mr. Hinchliffe). I know that the hon. Member for Wakefield wished to speak yesterday, but I understand that he is in his constituency today. Rugby league could not have a more persistent or persuasive champion than the hon. Member for Wakefield.

I am acutely conscious of the problem of rugby league grounds. Simply stated, all problems of crowd control arose from soccer. Soccer is getting a great deal of financial help to pay for its crowd control problems, but there are no problems of crowd control in rugby league, and rugby league is getting very little financial assistance to help make its stadiums comply with the standards of the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975.

I am aware of the problem and I will do everything that I can to help. I have agreed to meet the chairman of the Rugby League, Mr. Walker, and the chief executive, Mr. Maurice Lindsay, to see whether more money can be made available. Wakefield rugby club received £100,000 from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts, but that club alone needs something like half a million pounds to meet safety standards. It is a very serious financial problem, but I will do everything I can to help. I ask the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde to pass on my comments to the hon. Member for Wakefield.

I attended the first international between Great Britain and the Kiwis. It was a terrific occasion, attended by 36,000 people, and there was no sign of trouble anywhere. If we can raise the behaviour of association football supporters to half that level, we will have done a good job. I pay great tribute to the way in which rugby league supporters follow their marvellous sport.

The hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde asked whether I would consider any new suggestions with an open mind. I certainly will. The particular suggestion that he was considering was the NNC system of crush barriers. I should be interested to see how the Risley system works. Perhaps he could arrange for me to see it, and accompany me on my visit. The Risley system, or any system like it, has potential applications outside football and maybe for football as well, so I shall certainly want to look at it.

The hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde raised the subject of communications between stewards and the police, and referred to Mr. Malcolm George and the 1992 report of the Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The report gives good, detailed guidance and goes into detail about such matters as who should tell a referee to stop a match in cases of riot. It is an excellent report and it may assist the House if I arrange for a copy of it to be laid in the Library, where anyone who is interested in this subject can read it.

The hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde raised an extremely important point about increasing the involvement of supporters in soccer clubs. That has many ramifications. It is difficult when there are two groups representing supporters—I think that the House is agreed on that—and I should welcome new ideas about how we can involve supporters more.

There is a lot of feeling in the country at large that supporters of soccer clubs often find themselves treated not too well, and big money counts for more than they do. I am thinking, for example, of clubs changing kits every season and supporters having to buy new kits which cost as much as £50. Supporters ought to be consulted more and if any hon. Member has any ideas as to how that can be done, I should be interested to hear them.

The hon. and learned Member for Fife, North-East (Mr. Campbell) was concerned about Wednesday afternoons at universities, and I am 100 per cent. behind what he proposes. I am determined to see that university sport does not die out because it is played at different times at different universities and no proper fixture list can be drawn up. I also agree with his remarks about how the law-abiding soccer supporter is tarnished, most unfairly, with the reputation that the hooligans have given to the game.

I do not have a great deal of time left; if I had, I would agree with other hon. Members about the pleasures of standing. I also stood at Murrayfield, and have stood at various football grounds around the country. I agree with

the hon. Member for Norwood (Mr. Fraser) about the pleasures of standing, but, unfortunately, safety has to come first—hence the emphasis that we have put on the provision of all-seater stadiums in the premier league and the first division.

My hon. Friend the Member for Ryedale (Mr. Greenway) gave an interesting example of how Arsenal is dealing with ticket touts. I agree that the Government should look at that idea carefully and I undertake to do so. Perhaps my hon. Friend would like to have some further discussions with me to make sure that I have not missed some of the important details of this interesting scheme.

As for legislation, that is a matter for the Home Office. My hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) will not like this part of my remarks, but I understand that the Home Office is keen to bring in a law as soon as a suitable opportunity arises.

The other important point of my hon. Friend the Member for Ryedale was about the effect on the pools industry of the national lottery. The pools industry finances the Football Trust, which enables so many grounds to make the improvements necessary for all-seaterisation, if I can use a ghastly word. The judgment of the House is that the pools will not be badly affected. We should not guess at that, but monitor the situation carefully, see what happens and, if necessary, return to the subject. That is the straightforward way to deal with it.

My hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East is extremely knowledgeable about these matters, and I have discussed with him many of the problems facing Southend United recently, particularly the problem with the planning authorities. My hon. Friend invited me to take account of the real problems of real clubs. He made an important point which went to the heart of the matter. The real problem for successive Governments arose from tragedies such as Ibrox, Bradford and Hillsborough. It was Lord Justice Taylor's conclusion that all-seater stadiums were the best single way of dealing with hooliganism, although not a panacea. I should be very interested to visit Southend and to see its splendid pier and splendid football club, but I can discuss that with my hon. Friend outside the Chamber.

I have dealt with the point about touts that was raised by the hon. Member for Norwood. On his point about standing, I share his nostalgic but practical view about families, but the Government's policy is as stated and, as he said, standing is a romantic notion which we may have to turn our backs on.

I invite the hon. Member for Stalybridge and Hyde to say a few closing words.

7.17 pm

Mr. Pendry: With the leave of the House, I shall reply briefly.

This has been all too short a debate, as sports debates usually are, but it has been constructive. I thank the Minister for dealing positively with some of the points that have been put to him.

I should like to go to Risley with the Minister. The supporters association will hear what he has said; that is good news, and many of us can add to that particular input into the Minister's thinking. I am pleased that Malcolm George's report will be in the Library for all to see.

The world has moved on since the Taylor report. British technology is recognised as the best in the world for crowd safety. Lord Justice Taylor said in his report that complacency is the enemy of safety, and that must be remembered. I hope that the Minister will have an open mind about many of these issues.

I beg to ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Parliamentary Questions

7.18 pm

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): I beg to move,

That this House approves the First Report from the Select Committee on Procedure on Parliamentary Questions (House of Commons Paper No. 687).

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): With the permission of the House, that motion will be taken with the next on the Order Paper:

That Standing Order No. 18 (Notices of questions, motions and amendments) be amended—

in line 11, by leaving out "written or priority" and inserting "or";

in line 12, at the end, by inserting "and a Member may indicate a date for answer of a question for written answer in accordance with paragraph (4) of this order"; and

in line 14, by leaving out "priority written answer" and inserting "written answer on a named day".

Mr. Newton: The bonhomie that seems to pervade the Chamber this evening is in marked contrast to the situation 24 hours ago, when I announced that we were to debate the messages from another place on the Railways Bill. I prefer tonight's atmosphere, and I hope that I carry the House with me in that. Apart from that event, the past couple of days have had something of an incestuous air, as we come to discuss yet another aspect of our own affairs.

I will refer also to the second motion in my name on the Order Paper, which gives effect to various technical amendments to Standing Order No. 18 that are consequential on the House's approval of the Committee's report.

This is the first occasion on which the House has had an opportunity to debate a report from the Procedure Committee, which was re-established in December 1992. As in previous Parliaments, the Committee sits under the distinguished chairmanship of my right hon. Friend the Member for Honiton (Sir P. Emery), to whom I pay tribute for the immense interest and diligence with which he and his colleagues have over a long period pursued matters relating to the procedures of the House.

The topic that we are debating this evening originates in a report from the Committee towards the end of the last Parliament, which contained 24 recommendations covering aspects of the arrangements for questions and the rules of order governing them.

The Government's response said that we had a number of reservations about some of the recommendations—in particular, the proposal to reduce the maximum period of notice for oral questions from 10 to five sitting days. The Committee re-examined those points again and has presented in its new report a statesmanlike compromise—as I would expect of my right hon. Friend the Member for Honiton—on most of the points of disagreement that the Government, who in this context mean me, in my equally statesmanlike manner, are prepared to accept. On that basis, the Government ask the House to approve the new report as a whole.

If my right hon. Friend catches your eye, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he may want to say something about the details of the Committee's report. I will say a few words about the practical effect of the motion. Most of the Committee's recommendations can be implemented administratively under Madam Speaker's authority, but a number need the approval of the House.

The first of those is the ration for oral questions. Under the rules adopted in 1972, each right hon. or hon. Member is allowed up to eight oral questions on the Order Paper. Under the new system of printing many fewer oral questions, that limit has become redundant, and should now be dropped.

The rules also provide that not more than two oral questions per Member may appear on the Order Paper for answer on any one day. That limit only has any practical application on Mondays, when a number of different Ministers—I will not call them minor Departments, since mine is one of them—answer questions after 10 minutes past 3 o'clock. The Committee recommended that that limit should be retained and that in future, no more than two oral questions per Member per day should be tabled.

The second matter is priority written questions. The Committee expressed concern—which the Government fully share, and which I personally have felt for some time—about the possible misuse of priority written questions. The Committee reminded the House that

"the priority marking should be used sparingly and selectively"

and that

"the earliest permitted date should be reserved for those questions to which an urgent answer is genuinely required".

The change in the symbol for a priority written question from W to P had some effect on reducing the number of questions that are tabled for priority answer through inadvertence, but the Committee feels that further measures ought to be adopted. It proposes that questions marked P should be treated as priority written questions only if they carry a specific valid date for answer, as opposed to some vague wording such as "earliest date" or "as soon as possible".

The Government accept that recommendation and have accordingly brought forward a Standing Order amendment—the next motion on the Order Paper—to change the name of priority written questions to

"questions for written answer on a named day".

The third point requiring the endorsement of the House is the Committee's recommendation relating to campaigns. There have been occasions when individuals or organisations outside the House have sought to secure the tabling of large numbers of disorderly or badly drafted questions, many of which repeat attempts previously disallowed. The Committee's report describes one such episode in a particularly effective paragraph.

In 1971, Mr. Speaker Lloyd dealt with that problem by authorising the Table Office to refuse to accept any further questions that were recognisable as emanating from a particular individual. The Committee believes that, where the facts of the case justify it, the Speaker should be able to take similar action in the future. By approving the motion, the House will be offering Madam Speaker its support in taking any such steps if she thinks it appropriate to do so. In my judgment, to curb abuse in that way is to uphold the rights of right hon. and hon. Members rather than to diminish them.

I will refer briefly to three other matters. A number of the Committee's recommendations, such as those relating to blocks, are designed to allow questions to be tabled that at present must be refused by the Table Office. I must make it clear to the House that accepting that recommendation does not mean that Ministers will feel obliged to answer

them. The Government have, for example, no intention of relaxing the rules relating to the confidentiality of collective decision-making.

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): As to the blocking system, does the Leader of the House agree that it is for Ministers to decide whether or not to answer particular questions? We should attempt to lessen the policing role performed by the Table Office. It exists to help right hon. and hon. Members and does so, but it should avoid being seen—albeit wrongly—as the custodian or guardian of Ministers. If a Minister does not want to answer a question repeatedly asked by a right hon. or hon. Member, that should be left entirely up to the Minister concerned.

Mr. Newton: I acknowledge that, at the end of the day, it must be for individual Ministers to decide the answers they give, and whether they give a substantive answer at all. The Government's position on the report and the remarks that I have just made are much in line with the spirit of the hon. Gentleman's point.

The quaintly termed "Mayor of Sligo" rule has until now prevented one hon. Member from tabling questions about a Minister's communications with another hon. Member. Following the Committee's recommendations, the Government agree that, when a Minister answers a question to the effect that he or she will write to the hon. Member concerned, the reply will also state that a copy of the reply will be placed in the Library and so made available to other Members of Parliament, unless overriding reasons of confidentiality—such as might arise in a personal social security case—make that action inappropriate.

The Committee concluded with observations about answers "pursuant" to previous answers—which, as I well know, have occasionally caused some disturbance in the House and to the Chair. The Government welcome the Committee's recognition that there can be a place for "pursuant" answers where that is the best way to give information to the House quickly, and we accept the Committee's view that a pursuant answer that does not relate to the original answer must be out of order.

The Committee has brought forward a useful and practical series of recommendations. I thank again my right hon. Friend the Member for Honiton and his Committee—a number of whose members are present in the Chamber—for their work. I am sorry that it has taken a fair time to get around to presenting this motion, but I hope that its arrival gives satisfaction to my right hon. Friend, and that the House will be content to approve this and the ensuing motion.

7.28 pm

Mr. Nicholas Brown (Newcastle upon Tyne, East): I join the Leader of the House in thanking the Committee for its work and its report, and the right hon. Member for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) for his chairmanship and for publishing the Committee's thorough and detailed review in the form of the document before the House.

The Leader of the House is exhibiting uncharacteristic signs of self-pity today. Yesterday's events must have had a deeper and more scarring effect on him than I thought possible in someone whom I had always deemed robust.

Mr. Newton *rose*——

Mr. Brown: I was just about to say something nice about the right hon. Gentleman, but I willingly give way to him.

Mr. Newton: The last thing I want to do is stop the hon. Gentleman saying something nice about me. I cavil slightly at his use of the word "self-pity". I merely thought that the House did not do itself much good last night.

Mr. Brown: The Leader of the House—[HON. MEMBERS: "Apologise."] It is a little early in my speech to apologise. All I have done so far is thank the Committee for its work, make special mention of its Chairman and try to say something nice about the Leader of the House. Despite that, I hear cries of "apologise" from the Government Benches. I know that the Conservative party is going through difficult times at the moment, but apologies would be excessive.

I thank the Leader of the House for finding time for a debate on an important report and on the Government's response to it. As its members will know, the Procedure Committee published further reports—on the unified Budget, on private Members' Bills and on the timing of Divisions. The House will want to debate those reports in due course.

I make a plea to the Leader of the House for an opportunity to debate the reports and the Government's response to them. It would be helpful if we had an opportunity to debate in particular the second report on the unified Budget at an early stage after the Queen's Speech —and before 30 November.

The Procedure Committee's second report covered two key matters. The Opposition believe that the Government behaved irresponsibly by including legislation on those matters in the Finance (No. 2) Act 1993 before the report had been published, much less considered by the House. If the reports are to have any value, they should form the basis of an informed debate and then of decision-making. The House should not be presented with decision-making first and an examination of the matter afterwards.

Happily, the Procedure Committee's first report is not blighted in such a way. The Committee was right to re-examine matters which may not have seemed controversial—indeed, to which it decided to recommend no change—as well as one or two more contentious issues. Parliamentary questions are an important part of our system of parliamentary democracy. The continued effective functioning of those matters requires periodic review and constant vigilance.

Without re-examining every issue considered by the Committee, I should like to raise a number of issues that arise from its work and from the motions.

First, I hope that the timing of the shuffle for oral questions will be kept under review, and that the argument for deferment, until at least 6 pm, will remain under consideration as an alternative. It is far harder for hon. Members whose constituencies lie outside the home counties to deal with local pressures on their time and remain in the House on Fridays and Mondays.

Although the Committee has not recommended any change, I gleaned from its report that it understands the issue and that it is willing to keep it under review. It referred to the difficulty experienced by Welsh Members, with Welsh questions being tabled on Mondays.

On open questions to Departments, the report's suggestion that the request for the date of a Minister's next

[Mr. Brown]

meeting with a person or organisation should be accompanied by an indication of the potential subject of discussion seems fair. That recommendation strikes an appropriate balance and, to a great extent, deals with the argument for reducing the maximum number of tabling days for oral questions from 10 to five sitting days.

The best way to proceed would be to give that suggestion a chance to work. I support the Committee's recommendation. It has got the balance right in a well-considered way. I share the Government's reservations about immediately taking the more radical step of reducing the number of tabling days from 10 to five, because of the attendant difficulties with that proposal.

The Committee rightly rejects the introduction of rationing or quotas for written questions, and it sensibly points out that the indiscriminate use of priority written questions often leads to many holding replies.

The House should ensure that adequate copies of a booklet setting out the "dos" and "don'ts" of hon. Members' responsibilities for research assistants are available, giving formal guidelines rather than only a general call for good conduct. I took particular note of the Government's endorsement of the Committee's comments on research assistants, especially in the context of campaigning, although I notice that the Government made no mention of civil servants in the same context.

We must be careful about this matter. I understand and fully share the Committee's desire to prevent abuses, but such matters should be judged against objective criteria. In any event, if the Government answered parliamentary questions fully, frankly and truthfully in the first place, aggrieved Members would not feel the same need to campaign.

The section of the report on the questioning of ministerial statements made outside Parliament is clearly right. I strongly support the Committee's findings, because hon. Members should object to significant ministerial statements, especially those giving new information, being made outside the House. If Ministers have something new to say, this is the place to say it. As they do not always do that, it is right that we should be able to question them.

The Committee singled out chief executives of the next steps agencies for special mention. I strongly support its recommendation that Members of Parliament be given the benefit of the doubt, no matter how small it may be, when tabling questions to Ministers about the work of the agencies.

Substantial structural changes have been made in the last decade as a result of Government policy. Parliament should still be able to explore the functioning of those agencies, for which, perhaps, it has indirect responsibility. In addition, the Table Office should give Members the benefit of the doubt in such matters, and the Procedure Committee should stand up for the rights of Members.

My final point is on the use of written statements pursuant to earlier answers—a ministerial scam for making announcements as discreetly as it is possible to do in Parliament. Madam Speaker has rightly deprecated this practice. I deprecate the practice, as does the Committee.

Mr. Winnick: Does my hon. Friend recall that Madam Speaker made her remarks because of the way in which the Secretary of State for Health announced a prescription increase in response to a question that had nothing whatever to do with prescription charges? Was not that an unfortunate, and some would say disgraceful, abuse that should not happen again?

Mr. Brown: My hon. Friend has picked the worst and most slippery example, but similar examples have emanated from the Ministry of Defence. Procurement announcements inconvenient to the Ministry—I can certainly think of one that was close to my heart—slip out in such a way. It is not right that they should do so. If Ministers have anything to say, no matter how difficult it is, they should say it to the House and not try to evade questioning by other Members of Parliament.

The report is a thorough study of the issues. It is welcome, and in welcoming it I do not lose sight of the fact that the Leader of the House has allowed us to debate it. He has clearly taken note of the Committee's deliberations, to which the Government have responded fairly. I hope that we shall have an opportunity to debate the Committee's next two reports, especially the more controversial one on the unified Budget process.

7.38 pm

Sir Peter Emery (Honiton): I thank my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House and the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East (Mr. Brown) for the kind things that they said about me, although any thanks should be directed to the whole Committee which did most of the work and did it extremely well. I am most grateful to all the members of the Committee for their attendance to discuss what were not always scintillating, newsworthy or publicity-gathering issues. However, all members did their work thoroughly and I wish to ensure that they are also thanked.

After such a nice start to the debate, it may seem slightly unfair to be rather scathing about the Government. My right hon. Friend referred to the Government's reply to our report. Cmnd. 687 appeared in June this year, but the reply refers to Cmnd. 178 which dates back not to June this year, last year or even the year before, but to May 1991. Perhaps I might echo the advice given by the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East and suggest that we debate the reports rather more quickly than has been the case.

The 1991 report was the first wide-ranging investigation of rules governing parliamentary questions since 1972. It was clearly right, after 20 years, to deal with the issue. It would be fair to say that the Committee considered not only the mechanics of parliamentary questions but the rules restricting what can be asked.

The recommendations are not revolutionary, but they are designed to make the machinery work slightly more smoothly, to modernise some of the rules and make them more beneficial to Members in pursuing their own work. They remove a number of minor irritants and make a worthwhile contribution to the continuation of the effective scrutiny of Government policy and actions, a role which I hope the Procedure Committee will always play, although it is not always popular with Governments.

Sir Michael Marshall (Arundel): I rise with diffidence as I am a new member of the Procedure Committee. However, I assure my right hon. Friend the Member for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) and the House that I find the report wholly worthy of support even though I was not one of its authors. Does my right hon. Friend agree that the report also encourages one to consider further matters that,

inevitably, it cannot fully cover itself? I refer especially to questions on statements. I think that my right hon. Friend will agree that some hon. Members are worried about the lack of documentation available when questions are asked on oral statements. That is but one example of what the Committee should investigate in the future—I put in my bid.

Sir Peter Emery: I thank my hon. Friend. I agree entirely and welcome him to the Committee. He has considerable experience of the House and, as the president of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, he has seen the workings of many other Parliaments. He is therefore an excellent addition to the Committee. The Procedure Committee is turning its attention to the distribution of documents. The issue is not covered directly in the report, but I do not think that I shall be out of order if I say that it is something to which we shall be putting our minds in the immediate future.

The report deals with the machinery of parliamentary questions and the timing of the shuffle—we shall certainly bear in mind the suggestion about Mondays. It also covers the period of notice for oral questions. I am sorry that the Government could not go along with our suggestion immediately. I believe that it is the civil servants rather than Ministers who are the greatest objectors to moving in that direction. We were trying to make parliamentary questions more topical. If they were tabled only one week in advance rather than two, they would have greater topicality. The Leader of the House has dealt with the rationing of oral questions and the matter of open questions, but there is one matter that has not been mentioned.

The report refers in passing to bogus points of order. I hope that the House welcomes the strength with which Madam Speaker has dealt with them recently. Hon. Members who pursue bogus points of order take up the time and take away the rights of those hon. Members who wish to proceed with proper business.

We recommended that it should be permitted for discussions between Departments to be commented on, but it was not our intention to do away with absolute confidentiality. No Government—not even a Liberal Government—would want to discard Cabinet and ministerial confidentiality; it would be impossible to do so.

The report also tried to cover statements made outside Parliament, the internal affairs of other countries, suggested amendments to Bills, campaigns, Government achievements, the nationalised industries and executive agencies. Where necessary, we tried to bring the rules covering such issues up to date.

I am glad that the Government have seen fit to accept our second report. In my cynicism, I must point out that the Committee produced it within eight weeks of receiving the Government's comments, which had taken 25 months. We hope that we can offer the same service to the Government in the future.

Implementation of one of the Committee's recommendations would require certain changes to Standing Order No. 18. The Government were not only willing to accept that, but, in the hope that the House would approve it, they have specifically recommended those changes.

Finally, it was interesting to me and, I think, to the Committee that, when we invited hon. Members to submit evidence to us, there was a very poor response. Clearly, there was no widespread dissatisfaction in the House.

Our recommendations should not lead to an increase in the volume of parliamentary questions. The House gets through very many questions—I do not query whether they are justified—and we should not want to increase that number. We stress that answers must remain entirely the responsibility of Ministers.

May I detain the House one moment more and respond to a point raised by the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East? The Government have now received our report on the unified Budget. We make some simple but positive recommendations. We recommend that the motion dealing with finances and borrowing should be clearly understood. That is essential in a modern Parliament. Our aim was to improve some of the rather archaic procedures involved in Budget resolutions, which I do not believe that one in 10 hon. Members or one in 1,000 people outside the House understand. The motion should be understood not only in the House but outside.

I urge my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House to deal with this issue before the Budget. I do not want us to drift into a discussion of the unified Budget in the same way as we dealt with the old Budget in April. If that is the case, we are likely to be back under the old structure without any new or modern thinking.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for allowing the Chairman of the Procedure Committee to be so out of order by referring to a subject which is not part of this debate. I have made my point. I thank my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House for this debate and for his co-operation with the Committee when we deal with matters in general.

7.49 pm

Mr. Paul Tyler (North Cornwall): I am delighted to follow the right hon. Member for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) because that enables me, first, to pay my tribute to the way in which he leads our Committee and, secondly, to add to what he has just said.

It is rather extraordinary that the Select Committee on Procedure, which has a special role in reporting back to the whole House and a special responsibility to look after the interests of Back Benchers and minority parties, has no say in the priority given to the consideration of its reports. Therefore, I wholly endorse the comments of the right hon. Member for Honiton about the urgent need for the whole House to consider our report on the unified Budget.

There are only eight sitting days left before the Budget is presented to us. It would surely be absurd if we were not to take advantage of the careful advice of the Select Committee on Procedure on the unified Budget.

Although I realise that I must not stray too far, with regard to the priority attached to the report that we are debating tonight, I endorse the point made by the right hon. Member for Honiton about the Government's long digestive process before allowing us the opportunity to debate Committee recommendations in the House.

Although the matter does not lie entirely in the hands of the Leader of the House, I hope that his digestion is working rather more speedily with regard to the report of the Select Committee on Sittings of the House chaired by the right hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Jopling). That report is also extremely important.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I hesitate to intervene, but I am sure that the hon. Gentleman realises that he is well out of order. He should return to the motion before the

[Mr. Deputy Speaker]

House. I have been tolerant because my voice is not as good as it was yesterday. It would be helpful to the Chair if the hon. Gentleman would return to the motion before us.

Mr. Tyler: I am trying to relate the priority that we attach to this report to previous reports.

Although I cannot speak for all members of the Procedure Committee, I think that it would be fair to say that we all recognise that we will return to the matter of parliamentary questions time and again. As the right hon. Member for Honiton said, questions have been discussed in the Procedure Committee and in the House on previous occasions. There must be constant vigilance and the situation is evolutionary. Within the time frame of the discussion of this report, there have been changes.

As an example of a topical point, I asked the Leader of the House a question about parliamentary questions:

"who is responsible for deciding the maximum permissible cost of answering a written parliamentary question; if that cost is different for different Departments; and how often that amount is reviewed."

Very courteously, as always, the Leader of the House replied:

"If an answer to any written question is likely to cost more than £450—the current cost threshold, calculated by the Treasury—the answering Minister will decide whether to refuse to answer on the ground of disproportionate cost, or whether to answer it whole or in part regardless of cost. This threshold, which applies to all Departments, is reviewed annually."—[*Official Report*, 25 October 1993; Vol. 230, c. *425*.]

Although the Procedure Committee's report does not refer to that specific issue, it is an example of the kind of subject that we must return to regularly in this House. It is curious that the Government are judge, jury and plaintiff when deciding how to apply those criteria. We do not know how they are applied, although the Leader of the House was kind enough to give me some idea in his reply. Perhaps the House should have a say in that and it may be a subject to which the Procedure Committee will have to return.

The purpose of questions can be very wide. They may genuinely seek information, just as an answer might involve carefully avoiding the provision of information. As we are all aware from the bear pit section of the daily order of business, questions can involve sparring and striking sparks. However, questions are clearly an important function in the relationship between the Back Bencher and the Executive.

Therefore, the right hon. Member for Honiton rightly emphasised the importance that we attach to continually monitoring what is happening to questions, be they oral or written, to ensure that they at least try to serve that function, however much some parties, individuals or parts of this House may try to hijack that process.

The report makes some modest tidying-up improvements. However, one or two changes are significant in that they try to prevent the Government from sliding out from providing full information to hon. Members. In its own small way, the Mayor of Sligo rule is important. In the past, that was used as a way of not providing full information to hon. Members. In responding to that point, the Leader of the House has done us all a service. The response to replies pursuant to previous answers is also a step forward.

However, I share the disappointment of the right hon. Member for Honiton about notice. I believe that the House operates at its best when it is topical and relevant. The Select Committee considered that point very closely and, in his evidence to us, the Leader of the House indicated that answers are very often available within the period in question. He did not want to be tied to a specific time as he felt that that would be too constraining on Ministers. We have all suffered from holding answers at some time. I should be prepared to accept more tentative, holding answers if we could have more topical replies to more topical questions.

To return to my first point, the Procedure Committee has a special relationship with the House. It seeks to serve the whole House and particularly Back Benchers. In future, I hope that the priority given to the consideration of our reports will be related more to the urgency that we on the Back Benches attach to a subject and not to the slow digestive process of the Treasury Bench.

7.56 pm

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): I apologise to the House for not being present for the speeches by the two Front-Bench spokesmen. I had intended to be present, because I have examined this report and the 1991 report carefully. To make amends for my sins of omission and for my absence, I will be very brief.

My first point relates to open questions to the Prime Minister. Two letters were submitted to the Procedure Committee and are contained in the 1991 report. The first was from my hon. Friend the Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell). He suggested that the Prime Minister should face closed questions and not open questions. He thought that open questions allowed the Prime Minister off the hook as they did not concentrate on a particular item. I concede that there may be a problem of relevance, particularly with questions being set two weeks in advance of Question Time.

The second letter was from my hon. Friend the Member for Falkirk, West (Mr. Canavan). He suggested that the procedures with open questions to the Prime Minister should be dispensed with. Instead of asking about the Prime Minister's activities on a specific day and being provided with the details, questions should be such that they should be responded to immediately. As soon as an hon. Member's question was called, he should ask his question and he would not have to jump up and down twice as is usually the case.

Perhaps an experiment could be undertaken to combine those two notions. There are Prime Minister's questions on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On one of those occasions, Question Time could be given over specifically to closed questions. We could then discover whether the ideas of my hon. Friend the Member for Linlithgow were relevant.

Constituents have asked me why, when the Prime Minister is answering questions, another topic is suddenly raised. It seems that the Opposition have the Prime Minister cornered on an item and then the next Opposition Member raises a question an entirely different topic. People want to know why we do not pursue a particular issue.

Mr. Winnick: I am grateful to my hon. Friend, who is one of the most active people in the House at Question Time and on other occasions. Does he recognise that those of us who remember the closed question now accept without reservation that the open question is a wonderful opportunity, not only for the Opposition, but Government

supporters as well, whereas, because of the changing political scene, a closed question might have little relevance in 10 or even five days' time?

The open question provides Back Benchers in particular with the opportunity to ask questions about a situation that may have arisen on the day itself. To take away what we have gained would be a grave disservice to Back Benchers, but of some use to the Government. I hope that my hon. Friend will recognise that. Although that suggestion was made with the best of motives, I hope that my hon. Friend will recognise that the result would be against the interests of all hon. Members.

Mr. Barnes I take my hon. Friend's point, which is why I was suggesting an experiment. Some of us who are more recent Members might then be able to observe the difference between an open question session and a closed question session. However, the suggestion that we should dispense with some of the ritual could be readily pursued.

My second point relates to hon. Members being unable to table written questions unless the House is in session. It would not be a great problem if we had a sensible parliamentary year with the weeks spread out carefully, but we have a considerable summer recess. Given that Parliament will be prorogued tomorrow, over a 17-week period we shall have been absent for 14 weeks. During those 14 weeks, there is no chance to table written questions and get answers. The alternative is to write letters to the Departments, but that process is not open to public scrutiny and is not likely to be pursued as rigorously by the Departments as questions would be.

Ideally, I would like to change the parliamentary year to overcome the problem, but if the problem is to remain, thought needs to be given at some stage to whether it is possible to put down early-day motions, written questions and various other matters of a written nature in front of the House to get appropriate answers and have them published in *Hansard*.

Thirdly, one of the best question times that takes place in the House—it is the most rigorous and fruitful—does not happen in the great glare of publicity, but in Standing Committees A and B, which deal with European legislation. It is possible to have an hour of questions to the Minister on a limited item that is in front of the Committee and later to have up to an hour and a half of debate in connection with it. We need to take on board the lessons that come out of those Committees' activities. I realise that there is a distinction. The question session is similar to a statement being introduced on the Floor of the House, which we can all question; but we cannot follow on from a statement, and a statement is likely to cover a much wider area than the matters that are involved in Standing Committees A and B. There is a difficulty with having something as narrow as that in the House.

I am impressed by question time in Committee, but it means that the Minister has to be well briefed and know carefully the item with which he is dealing. I have always found those question sessions educational and useful during subsequent debates. I might sometimes turn up having not fully digested all the relevant papers that are put in front of us and discover during question time that there are useful ideas that can be picked up from those papers, dealt with or pursued.

That seems to be parliamentary procedure at its most useful, although it is not the most significant issue with which the House deals, because problems such as scrutiny should be pursued.

8.4 pm

Mr. Newton: Rather than detain the House, I need say only three things briefly. First, several of the points made by the hon. Member for Derbyshire, North-East (Mr. Barnes) are further bright ideas for my right hon. Friend the Member for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) to consider in his Committee. I would not wish that to be taken as an endorsement of them, but nor would it be right for me to seek to inhibit the Committee in considering them.

Secondly, I thought that the interesting exchange between the hon. Members for Walsall, North (Mr. Winnick) and for Derbyshire, North-East (Mr. Barnes) about open and closed questions answered what the hon. Member for Cornwall, North (Mr. Tyler) was saying about the timing rules for the tabling of oral questions. I did not understand his reference to being happy to have a holding answer, because that does not arise with oral questions —certainly not oral questions that are reached. The real point is that the topical questions in which people are interested do not relate to something that happened five days ago as opposed to 10 days ago, which was the point that the hon. Member for Walsall, North was making. They relate to what was on the "Today" programme that morning or in that morning's newspapers or on the lunchtime news.

As I well know from my occasional duties in deputising for the Prime Minister on Tuesdays and Thursdays, it is essential to keep up with news that comes in throughout the day and not news that was established five or 10 days ago. I will not go further into that except to say that the argument about whether it is five days or 10 does not meet the point about topicality. I do not think that it would make much difference one way or the other.

You may not understand my next comment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because you were not in the Chair at the time —at least not when the hon. Member for Cornwall, North was pulled up for being out of order. It is clear from the way in which they have strayed into discussing a report that is not on the Table that some members of the Procedure Committee feel some degree of exemption from the rules of order. I admire their skill, but do not think that it would be right for the Leader of the House to follow their example.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved,

That this House approves the First Report from the Select Committee on Procedure on Parliamentary Questions (House of Commons Paper No. 687).

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Ordered,

That Standing Order No. 18 (Notices of questions, motions and amendments) be amended—

in line 11, by leaving out "written or priority" and inserting "or";

in line 12, at the end, by inserting "and a Member may indicate a date for answer of a question for written answer in accordance with paragraph (4) of this order"; and

in line 14, by leaving out "priority written answer" and inserting "written answer on a named day".—*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL *[Lords]*

Read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House. —*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Bill imediately considered in Committee; reported, without amendment.

Motion made, and Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 75 (Third Reading), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed without amendment.

SCOTTISH LAND COURT BILL *[Lords]*

Read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House. —*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Bill immediately considered in Committee; reported, without amendment.

Motion made, and Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 75 (Third Reading), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed without amendment.

HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSIONERS BILL *[Lords]*

Read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House. —*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Bill immediately considered in Committee; reported, without amendment.

Motion made, and Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 75 (Third Reading), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed without amendment.

PROBATION SERVICE BILL *[Lords]*

Read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House. —*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Bill immediately considered in Committee; reported, without amendment.

Motion made, and Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing order No. 75 (Third Reading), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed without amendment.

PENSION SCHEMES BILL *[Lords]*

Read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House. —*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Bill immediately considered in Committee; reported, without amendment.

Motion made, and Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 75 (Third Reading), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed without amendment.

PENSION SCHEMES (NORTHERN IRELAND) BILL *[Lords]*

Read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House. —*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Bill immediately considered in Committee; reported, without amendment.

Motion made, and Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 75 (Third Reading), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed without amendment.

Statute Law (Repeals) Bill *[Lords]*

Motion made, and Question proposed, That the Bill be now read a Second time.—*[The Attorney-General.]*

8.17 pm

Mr. John Fraser (Norwood): Unlike the previous Bills, the one before us is not a consolidation measure, but a recommendation from the Law Commission which I welcome. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the draftsmen and the Law Commission on the extent to which all the Bills, including the Statute Law (Repeals) Bill, simplify the law, and make it more accessible and easier to understand for non-lawyers as well as lawyers.

I do not wish to go into the detail of the Bill—I think that part X of the first schedule deals with the re-edification of cities in the reign of Henry VIII, so no doubt there were inner-city problems even then. I congratulate the Government on bringing the measures from the Law Commission to the House rapidly—always with the Opposition's co-operation. However, I regret that other Law Commission recommendations involving law reform —which is not consolidation or statute law repeal—are not so readily introduced. Those measures would often command the support of almost every part of the House, yet necessary measures of law reform are often neglected. I only wish that the Attorney-General and the Government showed as much enthusiasm for the other Law Commission reports as they do for the measure before us, which I welcome.

8.18 pm

Mr. Andrew Mackinlay (Thurrock): I shall not detain the House long, but I believe that the legislation should not pass without comment. The last time that I prepared myself to speak on a report and legislation proposed by the Law Commission was immediately prior to a debate in the House on the secretarial office allowance about a year and a half ago. As a new Member, I hesitated to delay the business of the House as the Benches were packed and hon. Members were anxious to begin that debate.

I hesitate to rise now, bearing in mind that the next business relates to something which preoccupies many of my hon. Friends. Nevertheless, while congratulating the Law Commission on its work and on the entertaining and well-documented report which accompanies the Bill, the House is failing in its duty to scrutinise a detailed piece of legislation if the Bill is allowed through on the nod. That is not proper law-making.

I will demonstrate by pointing out that clause 2 of the Bill remedies an error which the Law Commission admits to in a previous repealing Bill. That demonstrates that the work of the Law Commission is not an exact science, and that the House is not doing its job properly in terms of scrutinising such legislation. It would be much better if such repeal legislation came in salami slices, rather than in one heavy document which we are expected to approve on the nod.

Clause 2 recognises that, in an earlier Bill, an Act of the time of King George III was repealed. The Law Commission subsequently admits that it discovered that the Act should not have been repealed at all and, at a stroke, they now wish to reinstate it in the statute book. That does not seem to be appropriate use of the Law Commission's power. This part of the measure is not one of repeal but rather one of reinstatement. If the job of the Law Commission is the removal of clutter and the need to modernise the statute book, how can it be right to restore to the statute book an Act of Parliament passed at the time of George III?

I commend hon. Members who wish to pursue the matter further to the document prepared by the Law Commission on this issue. The report states:

> "In 1978, when the repeal of the Enfield Chase Act was recommended, the trustees were not consulted because the Law Commission was not aware of their existence or of their reliance on section 60 of the Act. Consequently the difficult issues that are involved were not canvassed then. For this reason we are recommending, at the request of the trustees, that the position that obtained before the 1978 repeal should be restored by deeming the Enfield Chase Act not to have been repealed."

That is the restitution of the George III Act. I think that that demonstrates that the job was not done properly by the House in absorbing many repeals in a large Act of Parliament. I hasten to suggest that this time there will be other serious errors because of the sheer volume, and because this Bill is being discussed on the last day of the Session and before another measure that will obviously exercise a number of hon. Members because of its importance to Opposition parties and to the democratic system. I hope that the Law Commission bears that in mind.

I am concerned that a substantial section of the Bill relates to repealing Acts of Parliament which appear to relate exclusively to areas that are now in the Republic of Ireland. The measures are detailed in group 2, part XVI of the Bill and include such measures as the River Suck Drainage (Provision of Funds) Act and important measures that relate to the Dublin corporation. While I appreciate that the measures are no longer of importance to hon. Members, it is not clear that the Government of the Irish Republic—the Dail Eireann and Senate—has been consulted about the repeal of these measures. I think that they should have been consulted. *[Interruption.]*

The matter may be of some levity to some hon. Members but it is a matter of consistency. When we repeal measures that relate to other jurisdictions, such as legislation relating to the Isle of Man, it is clearly indicated in the documentation that the Government of the Isle of Man and the Tynwald have been consulted and have given their approval. Is it not consistent therefore if we repeal legislation relating to other jurisdictions that the Parliament and or the Government of those places should first be consulted?

Mr. Roger Evans (Monmouth): The hon. Gentleman's point is a serious one, and is not light at all. As there can be no attempted exercise of jurisdiction over Southern Ireland, it does on the face of things sound peculiar to repeal the legislation.

Is it not probably the case that the Law Commission —taking a narrow and utilitarian view—is simply reducing the number of volumes to be printed when current statutes are printed? In other words, is it not purely an exercise in pruning?

Mr. Mackinlay: The hon. Gentleman has missed the point, and I am disappointed that such a distinguished lawyer does not know the exact title of the country to which he referred. It is no longer Southern Ireland, and has not been since at least 1948. It is in fact the Republic of Ireland.

I am not arguing against the fact that statutes should be reduced in terms of convenience and to diminish both costs

[Mr. Mackinlay]

and waste; it is the principle that the Government of the Irish Republic should have been consulted if these measures still form part of its statutes. It is inappropriate that these measures should be repealed in this way without the proper consultation.

Mr. Michael Shersby (Uxbridge): I am interested in the point that the hon. Gentleman is making. He will allow me to observe that only 30 per cent. of the statutes are available in their currently amended form. That is a matter of great concern to hon. Members who are anxious to ensure that statutes are available to the public so that they can be studied in their up-to-date form.

Mr. Mackinlay: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman.

Page 201 of the Law Commission's report lists a number of Acts of the Parliament of the Republic of Ireland, but does not provide any cross-references with the schedule. We therefore have no way of knowing exactly which of the Republic of Ireland Acts referred to at page 201 of the report relate to the measures that are repealed in the schedule. That is both unfortunate and inappropriate, and I hope that that will be taken into account in any future repeal Bill documentation.

Given that part XVI of the schedule to which I referred earlier appears to relate exclusively to matters affecting the Republic of Ireland, I was surprised to find on the first page of the schedule reference to the repeal of the whole of the Constabulary (Ireland) Act 1866. I should have thought that it, too, would appear in part XVI. The Law Commission report tells us that the Constabulary (Ireland) Act has now been overtaken by Northern Ireland legislation and by the abandonment of the Royal Irish Constabulary in 1922. I understand that, but I seek an assurance that the Constabulary (Ireland) Act 1866 does not form part of the current statute book of the Republic of Ireland and if it does, the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Ireland were consulted about its repeal. We should be mindful of the fact that they inherited our statute book and that such consultation would therefore be appropriate.

I will not detail the House longer, but I give notice that if, in future, there is a stitch-up whereby important Law Commission legislation is placed before the use before other matters that are also of great importance to the House, I shall not feel constrained from moving amendments that seek to delete certain provisions, because it seems to me that the House is failing in its basic and most important law-making function.

8.28 pm

The Attorney-General (Sir Nicholas Lyell): The hon. Member for Thurrock (Mr. Mackinlay) has reminded us of the debt that we owe to the Law Commission and to the Scottish Law Commission for the work that they have carried out on all the Bills that we have considered this evening, especially this one. The report to which this Bill gives effect recommends the repeal of enactments that have been identified after detailed research and consultation as spent, obsolete, unnecessary or otherwise no longer of practical use.

It puts the work of these bodies in perspective when I tell the House that more than 2,600 such enactments, including 1,414 whole Acts, have been repealed as a result of 13 previous reports, and this Bill will add the repeal of 159 whole Acts and the removal of redundant provisions from 462 others.

I know that the hon. Member for Thurrock was not carping in any sense, and I associate myself too with the thanks expressed by the hon. Member for Norwood (Mr. Fraser). If there is an occasional mistake, it serves merely to highlight the diligence with which the commissions have gone through their work. I shall draw to the attention of the commission, which will doubtless read our debates, the point about Irish legislation. The hon. Member for Thurrock can be confident that we are not affecting the affairs of the Republic in any way. Courtesy is courtesy; the hon. Gentleman's points will not go unnoticed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House. *—[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Bill immediately considered in Committee; reported, without amendment.

Motion made, and Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 75 (Third Reading), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed.

Opposition Parties (Financial Assistance)

8.32 pm

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): I beg to move,

That, in the opinion of this House, the provisions of this Resolution should have effect in relation to the giving of financial assistance to opposition parties in this House:

1.—(1) Financial assistance to assist an opposition party in carrying out its Parliamentary business shall be available under this paragraph at any time on or after 1st January 1993 if at that time one of the following conditions is satisfied with respect to the party, that is to say

(a) there are at that time at least two Members of this House who are members of the party and who were elected at the previous General Election after contesting it as candidates for the party; or

(b) there is at that time one such Member who was so elected and the aggregate of the votes cast in favour of all the party's candidates at that Election was at least 150,000.

(2) The maximum amount of financial assistance which may be given under this paragraph to any party in respect of the expenses incurred by it in any period shall be the aggregate of

(a) the first relevant amount for that period multiplied by the number of seats won by its candidates at that Election; and

(b) the second relevant amount for that period multiplied by one-two hundredth of the number of votes cast for its candidates at that Election (rounded down to the nearest whole number).

(3) For the period beginning with 1st January 1993 and ending with 31st March 1994

(a) the first relevant amount shall be £4,080; and

(b) the second relevant amount shall be £8·16.

(4) For the period of one year beginning with 1st April 1994

(a) the first relevant amount shall be the sum of £3,442·50 but increased by the appropriate percentage for that period; and

(b) the second relevant amount shall be the sum of £6·89 but increased by the appropriate percentage for that period;

but if either of the resulting amounts is not a whole number of pounds and pence it shall be rounded to the nearest penny.

(5) For any subsequent period of one year beginning with 1st April

(a) the first relevant amount shall be that amount for the previous period but increased by the appropriate percentage for the subsequent period; and

(b) the second relevant amount shall be that amount for the previous period but increased by the appropriate percentage for the subsequent period;

but if either of the resulting amounts is not a whole number of pounds and pence it shall be rounded to the nearest penny.

(6) The appropriate percentage for any period is the percentage by which the retail prices index for the month of March immediately preceding that period has increased compared with the retail prices index for the previous March.

(7) The references in sub-paragraph (6) above to the retail prices index are references to the general index of retail prices (for all items) published by the Central Statistical Office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and if that index is not published for a month which is relevant for the purposes of this paragraph those references in that sub-paragraph shall be construed as references to any substituted index or index figure published by that Office.

(8) In consequence of this paragraph, the Resolution of 21st June 1988 shall not have effect with respect to any time after 31st December 1992.

2.—(1) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph 1 above, financial assistance towards travelling and associated expenses necessarily incurred by an opposition party's spokesmen in relation to the party's Parliamentary business shall be available under this paragraph at any time on or after 27th April 1992 if at that time one of the conditions specified in sub-paragraph (1) of paragraph 1 above is satisfied with respect to the party.

(2) The maximum amount of financial assistance which may be given under this paragraph to any party in respect of the expenses incurred in any period shall be such of the available amount for that period as may be allocated to the party in accordance with any apportionment under sub-paragraph (3) below.

(3) The available amount for any period shall be apportioned between each of the opposition parties in the same proportions as the maximum amount of financial assistance which may be given to each of them under paragraph 1 above for that period or for any period forming part of that period; and any such apportionment shall be made to the nearest pound.

(4) Any reference in this paragraph to the available amount for a period is a reference

(a) in the case of the period beginning with 27th April 1992 and ending with 31st March 1994, to £100,000;

(b) in the case of the period of one year beginning with 1st April 1994, to the sum of £100,000 but increased by the appropriate percentage for that period and (if the resulting amount is not a whole number of pounds) rounded to the nearest pound; and

(c) in the case of each subsequent period of one year beginning with 1st April, to the available amount for the previous period but increased by the appropriate percentage for the subsequent period and (if the resulting amount is not a whole number of pounds) rounded to the nearest pound.

(5) Sub-paragraphs (6) and (7) of paragraphs 1 above shall apply for the purposes of this paragraph as they apply for the purposes of that paragraph.

3. Any claims for financial assistance under this Resolution are to be made to the Accounting Officer of the House; and a party claiming such assistance shall

(a) furnish that Officer with a statement of the facts on which the claim is based;

(b) certify to that Officer that the expenses in respect of which the assistance is claimed have been incurred exclusively in relation to the party's Parliamentary business; and

(c) as soon as practicable after each 31st March following the passing of this Resolution, furnish that Officer with the certificate of an independent professional auditor to the effect that all expenses in respect of which the party claimed financial assistance during the period ending with that day were incurred as mentioned in paragraph (b) above.

4.—(1) In the case of any year in which there is a General Election

(a) the period ending immediately before the date of the Election and

(b) the period beginning with that date,

shall be treated for the purposes of paragraphs 1(1) and (2), 2(1) to (3) and 3 above as separate periods.

(2) In relation to any such separate period

(a) the first relevant amount and the second relevant amount for that period shall be a proportionate part (rounded to the nearest penny) of the first relevant amount and the second relevant amount for the year in question; and

(b) the available amount for that period shall be a proportionate part (rounded to the nearest pound) of the available amount for the year in question.

(3) In relation to any such separate period ending immediately before the date of the Election, paragraph 3(c) above shall have effect as if the 31st March referred to were a reference to the day immediately before the date of the Election.

(4) In this paragraph "year" means a year beginning with 1st April.

5. The cost of providing financial assistance shall be borne on the House of Commons: Members' salaries etc. Vote.

Madam Deputy Speaker—*[Interruption.]* I apologise to the House: it has been a long couple of days. Of course I meant, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was beginning to wonder as I listened for a while—before retreating—to the hon. Member for Thurrock (Mr. Mackinlay) whether the Labour Whips were as out of control tonight as they were last night. Fortunately, it seems that they are not.

[Mr. Tony Newton]

As the House will know, the motion provides for the revision of the amounts of money paid in support of the Opposition parties—which is perhaps ironic, given the circumstances of the past two days. I am glad to see that the hon. Member for Thurrock has the grace to smile at that. This money has come to be known as Short money after the Labour Leader of the House who first instituted the payments in 1975.

The purpose of these payments is to assist Opposition parties in carrying out their essential parliamentary duties at Westminster.

At the last review in 1988, the then Lord President, now Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords, carried out a thorough review of the workings of these funds and introduced new arrangements for accountability. My proposals are rather less sweeping. I seek not to review further the scope or purpose of the main Short money, but merely to update the sums paid. I think that the principle of these payments is both accepted and well established.

It has been customary to review Short money in the early part of each Parliament. The current formula was agreed in 1988 and provides that Opposition parties should receive £2,550 a year for each seat gained at a general election, and a further £5·10 for every 200 votes cast for the party. A party is, for this purpose, defined as having at least two Members of Parliament and having received at least 150,000 votes at the general election.

Mr. Simon Burns (Chelmsford): I am somewhat confused about the votes criterion. The Liberal Democrat party may have had more than two hon. Members elected, but each of its candidates said something different to each elector in his constituency, so does the party qualify for the money, and if so, how should it be paid, given the disparity among its members?

Mr. Newton: A good question.

The proposals have three elements, which are a good deal simpler in principle than the lengthy motion would imply. They are, first, that the two elements of the formula should be uplifted by 35 per cent. to allow for inflation since the last settlement in 1988. Secondly, from 1994 onwards, Short payments should be inceased every April by reference to the retail prices index. Thirdly—an entirely new element—a fund of £100,000 should be established for Opposition travel in connection with Front-Bench duties, to be distributed on the same basis as Short money and uprated in the same way.

On the main Short money, the Government propose an uplift of 35 per cent. to take account of inflation since the last settlement and to take effect from 1 April 1993. From 1 April 1994, therefore, taking account of the regular review proposals that I have introduced, the formula's two elements will be updated annually by reference to the retail prices index.

This reflects the view that I have held for some years —it was reflected also in my proposition to the House last night on Members' pay—that it is much more sensible to have a regular uprating mechanism for payments of this kind than to leave them for several years and then to have what looks like a large increase but actually is not so large, given what has happened in the intervening period. Whatever views people may have of these payments, I hope that it will be generally agreed that it is sensible to have a regular mechanism to keep them reasonably up to date.

The new element is the establishment of a separate fund of £100,000 for Opposition travel, to be distributed pro rata to Short money among Opposition parties. As with the main Short money, the resulting figures are maximums for expenditure incurred. In the previous Parliament the Rowntree trust, believing—it has proved, rightly—that there was a gap in our provision in this area, undertook an experimental project, not using public money, in which limited grants were made in support of Opposition travel for legitimate parliamentary purposes. Approaches from the trust and discussions with Opposition leaders have convinced the Government that there is a genuine case for provision of this kind, recognising the growing need for more Opposition spokesmen to travel in the United Kingdom and Europe, and the needs of their spokesmen on foreign affairs, defence and overseas development to travel if they are to do the job that our system expects of them —regardless of whether we always like what they say.

The provision for annual uprating of the travel fund will be on the same basis as Short itself—by reference to the RPI in April of each year. Arrangements for claiming and accounting will be in line with those already in place for Short money. The amount available for overseas travel by Select Committees is much larger than this fund, running at about £600,000 a year.

Those are the bare bones of the proposals. I shall not attempt to run through all the details of the motion, except to point to one detail that I know has given rise to some confusion. In paragraph 1(3), the motion refers to a period of 15 months from 1 January 1993 to 31 March 1994 and to amounts in the formula that do not correspond to the percentages that I have quoted. The figures £4,030 and £8·16 comprise 12 months at the revised rate for each figure, plus three months at the old rate. The effect is to change the start of the accounting year from 1 January to 1 April and to provide amounts for the resulting 15 month period to correspond with the proposals.

The proposals come well over a year after the start of the Parliament and are the product of extensive discussions through the usual channels. I hope that they will be welcomed by representatives of those channels as giving them properly provided support in our system for the work of Opposition parties. I also hope that the mechanism that I have suggested to the House will mean that we will not need to return to the issue in the near future. I commend the motion to the House.

8.41 pm

Mrs. Margaret Beckett (Derby, South) In March 1974, the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson said:

"No Government have anything to gain, and certainly the country has nothing to gain, from Opposition parties lacking the necessary facilities, financial and otherwise, for doing their job in the House."—[*Official Report*, 12 March 1974; Vol. 870 c. 72.]

As Prime Minister, he was proposing the funds that we are presently discussing.

The Rowntree Trust had made funds available then for a pilot project to help the Opposition with the costs of carrying out their parliamentary functions—an initiative which led to those whose posts were funded by that means to be known in Labour party circles as chocolate soldiers.

The spokesmen for the Opposition at that time, now Lord Prior, in response to the Prime Minister's statement, drew attention to the fact that

"one of the benefits of the change in Government in recent years"—

a benefit that is rather overdue at present—

"is that it has brought to the notice of Governments the very great difficulties from which Oppositions suffer, particularly Shadow Ministers."—[*Official Report*, 29 July 1974; Vol. 878, c. 33.]

From the onset of the scheme, some hon. Members have legitimately objected. Some clearly confused it with the separate principle of state funding for political parties, as previous debates show. My party and I support such funding for exactly the reasons that led in the first place to Members of Parliament and their staff receiving a salary from the taxpayer. Without such funding, membership of the House would be restricted to those with private wealth or to those who have attracted financial support on a personal basis from others with wealth and power. I repeat, we are not discussing the principle of public funds for political duties—not state aid for political parties as discussed by the Houghton committee and the Hansard Society—but support for some of the parliamentary work of the Opposition.

The idea of providing such funding has been repeatedly endorsed by the Top Salaries Review Body in its examination of the financial support provided by Members of Parliament. As long ago as the 1987 Parliament, it expressed the view that it should be "regularly updated" and it pointed out that at that time the support declined in value in relation to individual allowances for all MPs.

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): Does my right hon. Friend accept that money for Opposition parties was not necessarily such a revolutionary step, bearing in mind that candidates are subsidised for general election campaigning and that many hon. Members who are opposed to state funding of Opposition parties, as they are opposed to state funding generally, do not, I notice, object when they are subsidised as candidates at a general election when they receive facilities for which they would otherwise have to pay? Is not there an apparent element of hypocrisy in standing up and denouncing the subject of this debate?

Mrs. Beckett: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend that sometimes people fail to see such subjects in the round and where they are being inconsistent in their attitude to one thing rather than another. I take the point of my hon. Friend that one such inconsistency is the way in which all hon. Members benefit from such funding.

The Top Salaries Review Body suggested that there should be regular updating of the support and that it should be carried out on what it calls a realistic assessment of need. By drawing the analogy between the funding received by every Member of Parliament for their office costs and their staff and the way in which the TSRB support for the concept of separate Short money was expressed, it addressed another point that has been made in previous debates.

I refer especially to a notion that has found favour with Government Back Benchers occasionally in the past—that, as the office costs allowance has been increased for all Members, the need for separate funding for the parliamentary work of the Opposition has been eroded or removed. That view is clearly rejected by the TSRB, as it has regularly been rejected when it has assessed the enormous extra work load that is carried by Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen and their staff.

The board specifically drew attention to the discrepancy between the treatment of Short money and that of funding the parliamentary work of Back Benchers; in doing so, it highlighted an important issue that still has validity, which the settlement, whatever its merits, fails to address. The settlement before the House derives its validity, as the Lord President correctly pointed out, from the fact that it recognises the movement of inflation over the past six years since the 1987 settlement. The settlement also addresses—for which we are grateful to the Lord President—the thorny issue of the future movement of inflation, by linking the settlement to the retail prices index.

As there is so little public knowledge and the correspondence that Front-Bench spokesmen receive from the public makes it plain how little knowledge exists outside this place—and, often, not very much within it—about the background against which the settlement has been awarded, it is right to place one or two facts on the record for the benefit not only of hon. Members but of students of our affairs.

As the Lord President said, the settlement in cash terms increases the figure awarded in 1987 by 35 per cent. Since 1987, the office costs allowance paid to all Members of Parliament has increased in cash terms by 87·5 per cent. Since 1987, the costs of the Prime Minister's office have just about doubled in cash terms. In that figure, the increase for other costs—presumably equipment, travel, employment costs and other overheads—has more than doubled. The increases in salaries was less, at a mere 87 per cent.—closely analogous with the figure for the office costs allowance.

The final and perhaps the most significant myth, which previous debates have shown is also cherished by Government Back Benchers, is that only the Opposition draw taxpayers' money to fund parliamentary advisers and staff and their work. The Government also employ political advisers—a move which I wholeheartedly endorse. It is right that political advice and political work should be carried out by political staff and not by the civil service. The Government say that they are not able to tell us the overall cost of employing some 40 members of staff in those capacities to supplement the work of civil service staff and advisers. However, we know that the bill for their salaries alone has also about doubled since 1987. In 1993, that bill will amount to £1·37 million, slightly more than this settlement provides for the entire costs of the Labour Opposition.

On the basis of the Prime Minister's office, where salaries represent less than a third of overall costs, it would appear that the proper support services provided for the Front Bench of the Conservative party cost the taxpayer between £4 million and £5 million, as opposed to the £1·33 million that the settlement provides for the Labour Front Bench.

Part of the unquantified costs of the Government will be the cost of travel and accommodation properly met for advisers accompanying their Ministers on Government business in the European Community and overseas. In the previous Parliament, as the Lord President identified, funding for one visit a year to the institutions of the Community was provided for the first time to every Back Bencher. The same provision was made available to the Opposition Front Bench, but no further such provision.

[Mrs. Beckett]

Also in the previous Parliament, as the right hon. Gentleman was courteous enough to acknowledge, the Rowntree Trust offered the Opposition a small travel fund to help defray such extra costs. The trust did so with the explicit recommendation that such a facility should be taken up by the Government as a proper charge on public funds. I pay tribute to the Lord President for his work in persuading his colleagues to accept that notion. The Rowntree Trust said in its letter to him that it was right for such funds to be provided so that Opposition Front Benchers

"were not beholden in any respect because the costs were not borne by vested interests in the form of foreign governments and/or professional lobbyists."

It said that the matter was important, and I share that view.

The settlement enshrined in the order does not offer the Opposition any real opportunity, except in the area of travel costs, to expand and improve services to the official Opposition. We certainly cannot match the improvement in services to the governing party and to Back Benchers that have been supplied since 1987, but the settlement will at least allow us to maintain the service that we currently provide.

That is particularly important because, as the right hon. Member for Shropshire, North (Mr. Biffen)—I still think of him as the hon. Member for Oswestry—a former Leader of the House, identified recently in an article in *The Guardian*, the role of the Executive has become more and more powerful. All hon. Members are having greater and greater difficulty in getting answers to parliamentary questions. Answers that we used to get from Ministers tend to come from agencies, and Ministers seem increasingly reluctant to answer even those questions that they accept as being valid to them. That places considerable difficulties in the path of all hon. Members, and especially those whose role it is to shadow and scrutinise the movement of Government policy.

I shall give my last couple of examples of what the standstill in our parliamentary funding means. I appreciate that we are at least able to stand still and not to go backwards. For the Leader of the Opposition, when he was shadow Chancellor, we were able to provide from public funds money to employ one adviser to shadow the Treasury and the Chancellor's political and other advisers. For the shadow Foreign Secretary, we were able to provide from public funds money to employ one adviser to shadow the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Foreign Secretary's political and other advisers. I could go through the Departments to show that the position is the same for all of them, but I shall not.

For Opposition Front Benchers who match—in my view they over-match—the parliamentary work of Ministers of State and Under-Secretaries in, say, the Department of Health, which alone employs 12 press officers, we are able to provide from public funds, nothing. For Opposition Front Benchers who match the work of Ministers of State and Under-Secretaries in all the other Departments of State, we are able to provide from public funds, nothing.

In all those Departments that my colleagues shadow, thousands of civil servants back up the work of their Ministers every day, and we parliamentarians with our very few staff match them every day. We appreciate the work of the Lord President in presenting this settlement to the House, but I know which party in this place gives value for taxpayers' funds.

8.53 pm

Mr. Edward Garnier (Harborough): I appreciate that, on the 239th day of this Session, hon. Members will not wish me to speak for too long. I shall endeavour to puncture in the gentlest way the congratulatory bonhomie between Front Benchers on this subject. We are debating the use of public money, and we are entitled to examine a little more closely how it is used.

The right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) was concerned that the official Opposition, and I dare say the Liberal Democrats, were underfunded and were therefore not able to give as good a service as they would like to the constitution. The right hon. Lady did not need the assistance of Short money to prepare her speech. She had only to ask her PPS to go to the Library, or she could have gone herself, to pick up the document that I have here.

Opposition parties and all Back Benchers have the advantage of the Library and House of Commons research facilities. Hon. Members who are sufficiently interested to check tomorrow's *Hansard* will find that the right hon. Lady quoted almost verbatim great chunks from the House of Commons research document.

Mrs. Beckett: I used two quotes from *Hansard* which are contained in that document. If the hon. Gentleman has read that document, perhaps he will tell me where it contains the rest of the material that I used about funding that the Conservative party receives from the state. If he can show me that or any of the rest of the material that I used, I shall be grateful to him.

Mr. Garnier: I have no doubt that the right hon. Lady will be very grateful to the Government and to other Conservative Members over the years.

I should like to remind the House of the original purpose of the Short money. As the right hon. Lady has done us the courtesy of quoting from *Hansard*, as quoted in the Library research document, I need not refer to those passages again, save to say that it was Lord Wilson of Rievaulx, the former leader of the Labour party, who as Prime Minister set out in *Hansard* of 12 March 1974, vol. 870, column 47, as the right hon. Lady has just done, the purpose of Short money, although it was not called Short money at that time. The right hon. Lady also quoted from speeches by Edward Short, now Lord Glenamara, who also set out the purposes for which Short money was to be used.

There is a need for a properly funded Opposition set-up, and that is not in dispute between any of the parties. It is one thing to be in government, but it is another to make sure that the Government justify themselves, and if the Government are to be tested, the Opposition parties must be ready and armed in intellect, research documents and so on. *[Interruption.]* I note that Opposition Members are concerned about their ability to oppose the Government.

Although there is no dispute about the need for proper funding for parties, the public at large are entitled to know whether they are getting value for money. Large sums are involved. Reference to this excellent document prepared by the Library shows the amount to which the Opposition are entitled under the new uprating system. It may be of interest to many people outside to know that, in 1992, the

Labour party received just under £1 million in Short money. The amount was £946,250. I do not know how many hospitals could have been——

Ms Hilary Armstrong (Durham, North-West): How much did the Government receive from such money to do the same job that the Opposition did?

Mr. Garnier: The hon. Lady is confused, although I am not surprised. The Government do not get Short money.

The 15 months ending March 1994 will bring to the Labour party £1,577,000. For the year of 1994-95, it will get £1,331,000.

Mr. Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire, South): Does my hon. Friend realise that those sums are about what an average American Senator receives for his personal staff? Does he really think that it is wholly unreasonable that the party in opposition—whichever party—should have something a little in excess of that?

Mr. Garnier: I am sorry if I have confused my hon. Friend. What is at issue is not the principle that the Opposition should have some money to do the job required of a loyal Opposition, but whether the public are getting good value for the huge sums of money distributed to them. The sum of £1,577,000 over 15 months is a lot of money in anyone's book, whether one is an American senator or a British Member of Parliament.

Dr. Liam Fox (Woodspring): I must have misheard my hon. Friend, but I thought from the figures that he gave that the Opposition parties were to get a rise of 50 per cent. over last year, which seems rather generous in view of the other settlements in the public sector. Perhaps he can correct me.

Mr. Garnier: My hon. Friend may have misheard me. Let me repeat the figures so that he gets them on board. For the year 1992-93, the Labour party received £946,250 in Short money. Under the new proposals, over the 15 months ending March 1994, the figure will be £1,577,344 and, for 1994-95, it will be £1,331,173.

The Labour party is not alone in receiving Short money. The Liberal Democrats, who I am glad to see will be able to speak with one voice tonight as only one member of that party is here, received in 1992 just under £200,000—£199,420. In the 15-month period ending 1994, they will get £326,384 and then on an annualised basis for 1994-95, they will get £275,536.

I am as delighted as anyone that the Opposition parties should now have access to travel funds. However, I ask my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House whether that will enable the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown) to charge to the public purse his Cobbett's rural rides, or whether that cost will be borne by him personally or by the funds of the Liberal Democrats.

Mr. Andrew Mackinlay (Thurrock): Does the hon. Gentleman recall the one occasion on which I spoke to him? He was seeking a pair so that he could attend a court case in the Caribbean. Does he think that it is appropriate for him to preach about value for money when he is not a full-time Member of Parliament, given that he was pursuing another profession during the debates on the Maastricht Bill?

Mr. Garnier: The hon. Gentleman demonstrates the point that I am trying to make. Value for money is everything. The case that I was hoping to get to, but could not, was not in the Caribbean.

The new proposals under clause 4(b) make it clear that the accounts have to be properly audited by a professional auditor, as has always been the case. That is good, but to what extent must there be detail in the audited reports presented to Parliament and the regulatory parliamentary authorities? Would it be permissible for the Opposition simply to say, "Opposition work" or "Work of the Shadow Cabinet"?

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Or "Work in the courts".

Mr. Garnier: Indeed, or in the courts. I believe that Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen work in the courts. The hon. Member for Brent, South (Mr. Boateng) is a regular attender at the courts as a barrister when he is not working terribly hard on behalf of the Labour party. Whether the hon. Member who represents the other bit of Brent goes to court, I have no idea, but I will leave him to deal with that himself.

I am concerned that, for example, on page 15 of the House of Commons Library brief, which is available free to all hon. Members without the use of Short money, reference is made to the money provided to the Labour party. The Shadow cabinet received 36·5 per cent. of the Short money going to the Labour party, the parliamentary Labour party staff 33·3 per cent., and the leader 21·2 per cent.

Mr. Campbell-Savours: How much do you earn in the courts?

Mr. Garnier: I do not know what Mr. Deputy Speaker earned in the courts last year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. If the hon. Gentleman wishes to catch my eye, he may do so. Mr. Garnier.

Mr. Garnier: Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am deeply grateful to you.

May I perhaps also, when discussing value for money, ask whether the public realise exactly what the official Opposition do when they seek apparently to oppose Her Majesty's Government. Let us take the example of last night's activities and ask Members of the House whether they appreciate exactly what was going on and whether the public are getting good value for the taxpayers' money. I understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I am sure that you will deprecate it as much as I do, that last night, during the course of the various debates——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. Gentleman must be aware that we are principally dealing with a motion about updating of funds. While it is acceptable to make allusions to the scope and purpose, I do not think that we can really go into details of events that are in the past.

Mr. Garnier: I modestly claim to be a student of history and there is much to learn from the past when trying to sort out what is best for the future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not sure whether you or the public are aware that the Short-funded Opposition parties, both Labour and Liberals, blocked the doors to the voting Lobby last night. Is that a new definition of the block vote?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Hon. Members must be aware that the Chair is well aware of what happened in all parts of the House, but those matters took place yesterday. We are not here to discuss them this evening.

Mr. Garnier: I am concerned that the public at large are not aware of the sums of money that are devoted to the Opposition parties and the way in which the Opposition abuse the money that they are getting by abusing the procedures of the House. If the public knew exactly what the Labour and Liberal parties did with the money and how they spent their time, they would wish us to take a much closer look at the way in which public moneys are spent on them.

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): My hon. Friend seemed to be saying a moment ago that the purpose of the Short money was thoughtful research by Opposition parties. Does he agree that not many members of the public would think that the sort of thoughtful research that they might be doing was into how to lock a lavatory from the outside so that the Serjeant at Arms could not get in?

Mr. Garnier: I am sure that my hon. Friend will have heard what the Deputy Speaker said about yesterday's events and I will not be drawn down that passage—if I might so call it—again. I would ask the House to bear in mind before they pass this resolution, with or without a vote, that the public are entitled——

Mrs. Beckett: I was hoping that before the hon. Gentleman left this most interesting discussion, he would deal with another important fact that perhaps he will not find in his free copy of the document from the Library, which is how we get value for money from the costs of the Prime Minister's office, which are now running at £10·7 million a year.

Mr. Garnier: As I recall, the right hon. Lady has had to stand in for the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) on a number of occasions during Prime Minister's Question Time. She has never used that opportunity to ask that question. I should have thought that that question would have been better asked on such an occasion than of me this evening.

I know that a great many Members of the House wish to speak on this most important matter this evening and I will not detain the House for very much longer. Suffice it to say that the public are entitled to expect the Members of the House to consider rather more carefully the way in which money is provided by the taxpayers for the Opposition parties, and to ensure that the money is properly spent and accounted for in a public fashion. Then, at a general election, if the Opposition are right when they say that they give good value for money as an Opposition, the public will have the opportunity to keep them in opposition so that they continue to give good value for money.

9.8 pm

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): I had seen the brief before, but I had never heard the advocate. The brief might have been worth something, but I do not think that the person to whom it was given would get paid a lot for that performance. [HON. MEMBERS: "Not even in the Caribbean."] Not anywhere. I do not know whether the electors of Harborough would think that it was great value for money either.

I am sorry that my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire (Mr. Kirkwood) is not here. He is the relevant usual channel for the Liberal Democrats and the other minority parties. He would be here were it not for the fact that, after the most recent meeting of our parliamentary party, which was extremely abstemious and held in the precincts of this place, he was struck by something like food poisoning and has not been around, apart from voting yesterday. He sends his apologies and I trust that the Leader of the House and the deputy leader of the Labour party will understand.

We are debating these matters now because we did not index-link Short money in 1987. Had we index-linked Short money in the same way as we have now linked other payments concerning Members' pay, we should not have had to return to it today.

The hon. Member for Woodspring (Dr. Fox), who intervened a few minutes ago, clearly was not present for the speech by the Leader of the House. We are discussing the first increase since 1987. It reflects the changes in the size of the Opposition parties. The amount that parties get reflects their size in the House. If the Labour party gets more this time, it is because it has a larger number of Members in the House. *[Interruption.]* The hon. Member for Chelmsford (Mr. Burns) seems to have some obsession about Liberal Democrats.

Mr. Burns: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I have not opened my mouth in the past five minutes. It was not me.

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): It was me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Chingford (Mr. Duncan-Smith) can put down his hand.

Mr. Hughes: I shall make no comment about what the hon. Gentleman was doing in the past five minutes, but it sounded as though he had said something.

It has also taken a long time for a settlement to be reached. That is regrettable: it has been a long parliamentary Session since last summer and it has taken until now to agree.

All those who understand democracy in Britain agree that there should be funding for the work of Opposition parties in this place. I should stress to the hon. Member for Harborough and his colleagues that the system was introduced by the Labour party when it was in government, and the Conservative party was the first to benefit from it as the then Opposition. It may not be long before Conservative Members are in need of it again, and they will be grateful that we have passed this motion tonight.

It is far better to have this system than what the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) rightly called the chocolate soldiers precedent. The Rowntree Trust helped us out, but that is not the proper way to fund a political system.

It is also a completely different issue from either the state funding of parties or of members. It is so that political parties in this place can have some collective specialist ability to do their job. It does not fund more than a single figure number of staff for my party. There are about seven or eight paid staff and some equipment to serve the whole panoply of Departments for those of us who have parliamentary spokesmanship jobs. I shadow seven or eight Ministers in this place. *[Laughter.]* That is true, as there are about 100 Ministers. Many of us fund research for

that from our own office costs allowance, topped up considerably from our salaries, in my case for every year in 10 years.

The right hon. Lady was right to say that the bill which the Government charge the taxpayer both in terms of the conventional running of the Prime Minister's office, the press officers—hundreds of them for all Departments—the civil service and now the political advisers runs into seven-figure sums. The total figure for the largest Opposition party, at something over £1 million, is a relatively modest contribution.

Let me remind the House and anybody who reads this hereafter that we are debating the measure on the basis of the Government getting millions and millions of pounds of public money when at the last election they got 41·9 per cent. of popular support, with the Labour party getting more than one third or 34 per cent. of the vote and getting only the Short money figure that the hon. Lady enumerated. My colleagues and I had 17·8 per cent. of the vote and will receive about £300,000 for the entire year. Five other parties, which have not yet been mentioned, also benefit from the order—the two nationalist and three Irish parties. They receive funding commensurate with their size and with the votes cast.

The last justification is that increasingly we have a more difficult job to do. European and domestic legislation is more technical. I accept that the Library service does an extremely good job, and I am on record as paying tribute to it. However, at short notice it often cannot respond to demands to provide information necessary to a political party.

I pay tribute to the Leader of the House, who has been helpful, courteous and efficient throughout. His has been a difficult job in defending the interests of the House when there has been such pressure on him from both the Treasury and his colleagues. It is a tight public expenditure round and the settlement is fair. We all owe much to the right hon. Gentleman—and I hope Conservative Members realise it—for providing a settlement which, from now on, will look after hon. Members in their official duties within their parties. It will do so in a fair and reasonable way and without the need to return to the House for a further order.

The postscript is that the travel fund is hardly an enormous sum, given the duty on political parties to keep up with the responsibilities of Government and Parliament.

The country expects us to be well informed and to do our job properly. The motion is reasonable and fair. It is also modest. It will ensure that we do our job better and serve the nation better in the days ahead.

9.16 pm

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): I shall not detain the House for long, but there are a couple of points that I wish to raise. I do not want to go into the detail of whether any funding should be given to Opposition parties to pursue their duties. I accept that, to some extent, there may be some requirement for that. However, I do not always understand why. One element of the fund is for research and I accept that there may be some need to find out a little about what is going on—but to what extent? What is the research for? I shall return to that matter in a moment.

Another element of funding is for travel. I wonder what the Opposition parties do when they go to other countries. What do they talk about? There used to be a convention that, when overseas, Opposition Members did not talk about how rotten the Government were. That convention has now been broken. Perhaps we should link to any funding a requirement that Opposition Members are a little more delicate in what they say about this great Government of ours. I think that that would be a fair requirement. I do not benefit too much from overseas travel at the moment, probably for reasons to do with the Maastricht debate. I suspect that I will not benefit for some time.

I want to comment on the transparency of the whole matter. I am concerned about what happens to some of the funding for research, which is a fairly loose word. I accept that if the funding is applied directly to research in matters to do with the House, it is reasonable to provide such funding. However, I am concerned that some of the money might find its way outside the House to party organisations.

My borough, Waltham Forest, is Labour-controlled, and I am greatly opposed to its policies. I should not want some of the funding to find its way to that council. At a recent council meeting, there was a clash about the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act—legislation recently passed by the House. In particular, there were statements of objection that turned into a downright refusal to implement legislation that is on the statute book. One councillor said about the requirement to check whether people are in this country illegally:

"I'm not going to grass-up people for being illegal immigrants if they choose to live here."

It is quite clear from the Asylum Bill, which we passed and in which the Opposition were involved, that this is something they dare not do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Duncan Smith: I understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I may be straying from the subject.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I was giving the hon. Gentleman the benefit of the doubt. He was going to relate this to Opposition research expenditure, but he has not so far managed to do so. I wait with anticipation.

Mr. Duncan Smith: I was going to say that there was a possibility that the outrage in Waltham Forest might have had, at some stage, links with research work carried out here for the Opposition parties to support their ability to say these things. I denounce outright any group that defies the laws on the statute book. I am sure that the Opposition parties will want to do the same.

We should know more about where the money goes. We have a clear insight of things like office costs, but we do not have it here to the same extent; I would like to know more about where the money goes across the board. Transparency is a good thing, and I am keen to see a requirement for a more detailed inventory.

9.21 pm

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): I do not think that the Leader of the Opposition needs lectures from Tory Members of Parliament, about 200 of whom make money moonlighting in the law courts or as directors of as many as five, six or seven companies, and lining their pockets left, right and centre. Some 19 ex-Cabinet Ministers are now directors of 59 different companies. About six of those have moved into private companies, and many of them were Secretaries of State when the relevant legislation went through.

I want to deal with a philosophical argument about the money. It has nothing to do with the way in which the

[Mr. Dennis Skinner]

money is spent by my right hon. and hon. Friends; it is about the direction in which it is spent. Some Tory Members of Parliament are trying to suggest that somehow or other we get money in the same way as them. We do not get money from Asil Nadir or Greek fascists—we do not get any of that kind of money. I find it hard to believe that the Tory party is £19 million in debt, although I keep reading about it. I reckon that it has some more money stashed away in Liechtenstein, probably from the same bloke.

When the Short money was introduced in 1978, the Tories were the first recipients. They did not argue the toss about it, but were happy to take the money and run. I know, because I was here; I watched them and listened to them. What worries me is that we have had the money since 1979 and never won an election.

I have always held the view that the money could have been directed in a different way, not that it has been ill spent. That view is contrary to the view of some of my right hon. and hon. Friends. I said at the time that the money should have gone to the Labour party. I would rather it went to Labour party headquarters to pay for research assistants at national level and the regional Labour party headquarters. In that way, the whole party would benefit.

When the money was introduced, the Liberal party switched funds and switched certain personnel from the Liberal party headquarters down to Parliament in order properly to qualify for the money. I am not saying that the Liberal party was doing anything wrong, but we certainly did not do it. I was a member of the Labour party executive at the time, and my argument has always been that, as the Liberal party had shifted its personnel from its headquarters to work in Parliament, there is a case for the money to be used at that level. My hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East (Mr. Brown) knows about those discussions and is aware of the arguments that prevailed at that time.

We do not need Government lectures on spending because their own expenditure is enormous. No one can argue that is not the case. Some £10·7 million has been spent on the Prime Minister's office. When sunny Jim Callaghan left, the figure was £1·25 million. I know there has been some inflation, although according to the Tory Government there has been hardly any. Nevertheless, there is a big difference between £1·25 million at the time that Jim Callaghan left No. 10 and the £10 million being spent on the present Prime Minister.

The Government also spend more than £6 million a year on travel all over the world. There are more jaunts today by the Prime Minister and other Ministers—especially if they want to escape answering questions—than at any other time that I can recall. I am not arguing whether such expenditure is right in terms of the money being available —I just wish that money had been spent differently.

I do not imagine that the Short money will win us the next election. I am sure that we will win it anyway. I well understand why the Leader of the House is concerned about the money, because he knows that his party will be the recipient next time. He will probably be able to wear that top hat a lot more when we push through legislation.

I suspect that the special travel allowance is connected with the Common Market. Everyone knows my view that the Common Market has been an unmitigated disaster. The Government allow Back Benchers to travel to Strasbourg or Brussels once a year, but I will not go there. You will not catch me knocking on Common Market doors. It worries me that there is some connection.

Mr. Simon Hughes: Yes, there is.

Mr. Skinner: The hon. Gentleman should know, because he is always on about proportional representation and the unfairness of the present voting system. Short money is PR in inverse proportion to the number of seats and votes won. There are about 20 Liberal Members of Parliament and every one of them is a parliamentary spokesperson.

Mr. Hughes: All except two.

Mr. Skinner: That means that 18 out of the 20 Liberal Members of Parliament will receive the travel allowance. Of the Labour party's 270 Members of Parliament, only 85 will receive the allowance—provided that it is not confined to members of the shadow Cabinet. Perhaps the Leader of the House will say who will qualify. I have already established that 18 Liberal Members of Parliament out of 20 will get the money.

Mr. Hughes: It is only £15,000 a year.

Mr. Skinner: Yes, but they will share that between them as well. The hon. Gentleman has seven jobs. How much Short money will he get?

I suggest that the hon. Gentleman also examines the car allowance. If the leader of the Liberal party has three free cars, the others should share the rest between them.

9.28 pm

Mr. Roger Evans (Monmouth): My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House said that the principle was reasonably well established. That is typical of the insidious comfortable consensus that sometimes emerges from members of both Front Benches. This consensus is a particularly unpleasant 1970s consensus, from a dark age when fundamentals were not addressed. The Opposition parties are perfectly consistent and philosophical. They believe that public money can be spent on anything—that it does not belong to the taxpayer and is at the disposal of the state.

Political parties are voluntary organisations. To the Conservative, it is peculiar in principle that voluntary organisations should use the inquisition-type powers of the state to compel payments to them. It is fundamentally startling and wrong in principle.

Let us take the argument one stage further. Even if it is wrong in principle, what the motion proposes is bizarre.

Mr. Winnick: Before the hon. Gentleman leaves what he considers to be matters of principle, will he answer two questions? First, if it is wrong to subsidise, why does he accept a salary? After all, it could be argued that the taxpayer should not subsidise those who freely decide to take a chance on being elected to this place. Secondly, does not his constituency party receive a subsidy at a general election, to which, presumably, the hon. Gentleman does not object? That is taxpayers' money. Why does not he say that he is willing to pay and not the taxpayer?

Mr. Evans: The hon. Gentleman's arguments are fundamentally bad in principle. We have never objected to

the payment of hon. Members. What is wrong is the payment of informal voluntary organisations by the use of bizarre subsidies.

It is a peculiar anomaly that a nationalised industry—the Post Office—allows candidates to have freepost during elections. All candidates take advantage of that service. It is an old anomaly and it cannot be defended.

Paragraph 1(1)(a) refers to at least two hon. Members of the party who were elected after contesting the previous election as candidates of that party. That led to bizarre consequences in 1981, when members of the Labour party defected to the SDP and a specific resolution had to be passed to deal with that contingency. A special resolution had to be passed for Liberal Democrat Members who had not fought the preceding election as members of that party.

The point of constitutional principle is that, traditionaly, the constitution recognsies individual hon. Members, not political parties. The provisions of the motion are direct shackles on the freedom of hon. Members to leave parties and to form new one. That is not constitutionally right.

The second aspect is even more bizarre: paragraph (b) of the resolution. Plaid Cymru, mercifully for it, has enough Members of Parliament to get over the hurdle in paragraph (a). But under paragraph B, the point of principle is even more bizarre. A party with one Member of Parliament must have had the aggregate of at least 150,000 votes cast in favour of all its candidates. Even if we do not take it as far as my hon. Friend the Member for Chelmsford (Mr. Burns) put it—about parties where all the candidates say different things—there is a problem in Wales; Plaid Cymru attracted abut 156,000 votes. It got over hurdle (a), so this does not arise, but if it had not, three of those candidates were joint Plaid Cymru-Green candidates. We want to know in Wales whether it is one party—Plaid Cymru—or two parties: Plaid Cymru and the Green party. In fact, 170,000 people voted green at the last election, but they did not elect a single Member of Parliament, so this does not arise.

These are arbitrary and indefensible distinctions that arise because a scheme has to be set up to allot public moneys. We all know that, when it comes to allotting public moneys, principle is soon lost and adverse and unsatisfactory compromises result.

The third feature that is so wrong is what the money is spent on. The Library brief, which has been referred to, shows that little information has been published. It gives us some helpful information that apparently was volunteered by the Liberal and Labour parties. Figures for the most recently available year show that 21·2 per cent. of Labour's expenditure from these moneys went on its leader. We do not know whether that was to provide the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) with a golden palanquin and liveried servants to get to his place in the House. The Labour party does not choose to publish details of such expenditure. If public moneys are to be expended, I would argue that there should be proper public accountability.

Ms Armstrong: The hon. Gentleman's comments beggar belief. His party publishes nothing about its spending. We know nothing of how the Government are using the money that they receive for the Prime Minister's office or for political advisers to Cabinet members, but that money also comes from the public purse—and in much greater amounts than anything given to the Opposition.

Mr. Evans: They are payments for the Government and they are fundamentally different in character from payments for political parties. It is a completely different issue.

Mr. Duncan Smith: Does my right hon. Friend agree with my previous point, that transparency is all and that the Opposition parties should not be scared of it? Transparency would enable us to ascertain whether they were receiving money from socialist councils such as mine in Waltham Forest, which I decry.

Mr. Evans: Transparency and accountability are fundamental in the expenditure of public as opposed to private moneys. The current method is startling.

I have two final objections to the motion. First, this is the wrong time, and we are all familiar with that argument. The second objection is constitutional. It was taken up by the former hon. Member for Tiverton when the issue was first debated. There is no enabling Act of Parliament or proper statute to authorise the payment of moneys under this motion. That has important constitutional consequences.

Resolutions must now, due to the passage of time, be in order, and no one is suggesting otherwise. However, because the payments are made by resolution, they are not justiciable in the courts just as, I imagine, on the same principle, the standard spending assessments and the revenue support grants under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 are not challengeable by way of judicial review. In other words, the House is acting unilaterally and without judicial check in the courts in order to defray public moneys when we do not know in detail what they are being spent on. That is a constitutional abomination, and I shall certainly oppose the motion.

9.37 pm

Mr. Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire, South): When I came to listen to the debate, I did not expect that I should be speaking in support of my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett), the hon. Members for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) and for Southwark and Bermondsey (Mr. Hughes) and against some of my eccentric colleagues. In my estimation, the entertaining, witty and amusing speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth (Mr. Evans) qualifies him for immediate promotion to the Whips Office.

In the late 1970s, we were the first recipients of this largesse, small as it was. We put it to extremely good use: in two years we had returned the Conservative party to power, where it has remained ever since. The fact that the Opposition have perhaps not put it to such good use does not invalidate the concept.

There is a serious issue of which every hon. Member should be aware. When I intervened on my hon. Friend the Member for Harborough (Mr. Garnier), I referred to the money that is available to legislators in the United States and many other countries. We must remember that we are not talking about the funding of political parties. If we were, I would disagree with the right hon. Member for Derby, South because I do not favour public funding of political parties. We seek to increase the level of information and intelligence in the Chamber and to

[Mr. Patrick Cormack]

facilitate better debate. One might say that it has not always been terribly productive and that recent occurrences support that notion.

However, I believe that this is an extremely modest provision. It is sensible and fair to give to an Opposition party which has a very real national responsibility a relatively small sum of money to enable it to discharge its responsibility. After all, we are talking about Her Majesty's loyal Opposition. The quality of legislation in this place can be improved only if there is detailed scrutiny by people who know what they are talking about.

In recent years, Parliament has suffered because legislation has not been examined with sufficient scrutiny. There are many reasons for that. The fundamental reason is that in recent years, both Labour and Conservative Governments have broken their election pledges that they would introduce less legislation and not more.

I very much hope that, in two weeks' time, the Queen's Speech will include far less legislation and that we can really get on top of that legislation. No hon. Member, whether he or she be an Opposition Member or a Government Member, can honestly say that he or she honestly understands all the legislation that comes before this place. However, it is of fundamental national importance that the Opposition parties and particularly the official Opposition, should be able to do that.

I am not a critic of the civil service. I believe that this country is exceptionally well served by its civil servants. It is one of the great jewels of our system that we have a civil service that remains with the Government if the governing party changes. Our civil service is of great quality. However, when we consider the resources that the civil service provides for the Government and the meagre, modest resources which the motion provides for the Opposition, we cannot do anything other than support my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House if we look at the matter fairly and objectively.

I would include just one amendment to the motion. I believe that the money should be a little more widely spread. I should like the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) to be able to go abroad and to visit all the countries of the European Community. *[Interruption.]* The Opposition Chief Whip may want him to go permanently, but many hon. Members would not really want that to happen. We would love to see the new breadth, enlightenment and vision that would burgeon forth from Bolsover if the hon. Gentleman had a little Short money to take him round the world. I appeal to the Opposition to find some way to send one of the most endearing of all parliamentary characters on his travels.

9.42 pm

Mr. Newton: I have followed the debate with considerable interest. However, it is difficult to find points to which I can add a great deal more than what I said earlier. Without upsetting the Opposition, I must tell my Conservative colleagues that I found entirely understandable their concern expressed in the wake of last night's events. On the other hand, it is right to balance those concerns with the points made by my hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack), which were the points on which I tried to focus in my opening remarks.

I do not accept all the comparisons made by the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett). However, she knows from our discussions that I thought that she made several legitimate points, as did the hon. Member for Southwark and Bermondsey (Mr. Hughes). I am grateful to learn that they think that this settlement, which the hon. Member for Southwark and Bermondsey said is not overwhelmingly generous let alone profligate in comparison with the sums paid before taking account of inflation in the intervening period, is fair and reasonable and provides a base for a continued acceptance of a settlement along these lines.

I shall say very little more. I should reveal to the House that the only reason why I spoke at all was that there was some anxiety about whether the House was prepared for the next business—a task which I occasionally had to encourage others to do in my days as a Government Whip. But it enables me to put on record one point.

I realised during the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth (Mr. Evans) that I inadvertently misled the House in my opening speech by a slip of one word. I said, I think, that

"a party is for this purpose defined as having at least two Members of Parliament and having received at least 150,000 votes at the last general election."

As those who study the motion will see, it should have been "or" rather than "and" in the middle of that sentence.

It has not been absolutely clear in the debate, but it should be placed on record as my last remark in the proceedings, that a proportion of the money goes not only to the Labour party and the Liberal Democrats, but to the SNP, Plaid Cymru, the Ulster Unionist party, the Ulster Democratic Unionist party and the Social and Democratic Labour party on the same formulation as is applied for the main Opposition party and the Liberal Democrats. That should be clear to everybody, and it interrelates with the point that I am making in correcting the inadvertent slip in my opening speech.

With those remarks, I commend the motion to the House.

Question put:—

The House divided: Ayes 72, Noes 15.

Division No. 402] **[9.45 pm**

AYES

Allen, Graham
Amess, David
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Barnes, Harry
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Boateng, Paul
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burns, Simon
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chapman, Sydney
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Cormack, Patrick
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Harvey, Nick
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Lynne, Ms Liz
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
Maddock, Mrs Diana
Malone, Gerald
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Michael, Alun
Morgan, Rhodri
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Page, Richard
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prescott, John
Quin, Ms Joyce
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*

Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Short, Clare
Sims, Roger
Skinner, Dennis
Soames, Nicholas
Spellar, John
Steen, Anthony
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tyler, Paul
Wallace, James
Waller, Gary
Walley, Joan
Welsh, Andrew
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wood, Timothy
Worthington, Tony

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Michael Brown and
Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Bates, Michael
Elletson, Harold
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Gallie, Phil
Garnier, Edward
Heald, Oliver
Kilfedder, Sir James
Oppenheim, Phillip
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Steen, Anthony
Stern, Michael
Thomason, Roy
Trotter, Neville

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Iain Duncan-Smith and
Mr. Roger Evans.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved,

That, in the opinion of this House, the provisions of this Resolution should have effect in relation to the giving of financial assistance to opposition parties in this House:

1.—(1) Financial assistance to assist an opposition party in carrying out its Parliamentary business shall be available under this paragraph at any time on or after 1st January 1993 if at that time one of the following conditions is satisfied with respect to the party, that is to say

(a) there are at that time at least two Members of this House who are members of the party and who were elected at the previous General Election after contesting it as candidates for the party; or

(b) there is at that time one such Member who was so elected and the aggregate of the votes cast in favour of all the party's candidates at that Election was at least 150,000.

(2) The maximum amount of financial assistance which may be given under this paragraph to any party in respect of the expenses incurred by it in any period shall be the aggregate of

(a) the first relevant amount for that period multiplied by the number of seats won by its candidates at that Election; and

(b) the second relevant amount for that period multiplied by one-two hundredth of the number of votes cast for its candidates at that Election (rounded down to the nearest whole number).

(3) For the period beginning with 1st January 1993 and ending with 31st March 1994

(a) the first relevant amount shall be £4,080; and

(b) the second relevant amount shall be £8·16.

(4) For the period of one year beginning with 1st April 1994

(a) the first relevant amount shall be the sum of £3,442·50 but increased by the appropriate percentage for that period; and

(b) the second relevant amount shall be the sum of £6·89 but increased by the appropriate percentage for that period;

but if either of the resulting amounts is not a whole number of pounds and pence it shall be rounded to the nearest penny.

(5) For any subsequent period of one year beginning with 1st April

(a) the first relevant amount shall be that amount for the previous period but increased by the appropriate percentage for the subsequent period; and

(b) the second relevant amount shall be that amount for the previous period but increased by the appropriate percentage for the subsequent period;

but if either of the resulting amounts is not a whole number of pounds and pence it shall be rounded to the nearest penny.

(6) The appropriate percentage for any period is the percentage by which the retail prices index for the month of March immediately preceding that period has increased compared with the retail prices index for the previous March.

(7) The references in sub-paragraph (6) above to the retail prices index are references to the general index of retail prices (for all items) published by the Central Statistical Office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and if that index is not published for a month which is relevant for the purposes of this paragraph those references in that sub-paragraph shall be construed as references to any substituted index or index figure published by that Office.

(8) In consequence of this paragraph, the Resolution of 21st June 1988 shall not have effect with respect to any time after 31st December 1992.

2.—(1) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph 1 above, financial assistance towards travelling and associated expenses necessarily incurred by an opposition party's spokesmen in relation to the party's Parliamentary business shall be available under this paragraph at any time on or after 27th April 1992 if at that time one of the conditions specified in sub-paragraph (1) of paragraph 1 above is satisfied with respect to the party.

(2) The maximum amount of financial assistance which may be given under this paragraph to any party in respect of the expenses incurred in any period shall be such of the available amount for that period as may be allocated to the party in accordance with any apportionment under sub-paragraph (3) below.

(3) The available amount for any period shall be apportioned between each of the opposition parties in the same proportions as the maximum amount of financial assistance which may be given to each of them under paragraph 1 above for that period or for any period forming part of that period; and any such apportionment shall be made to the nearest pound.

(4) Any reference in this paragraph to the available amount for a period is a reference

(a) in the case of the period beginning with 27th April 1992 and ending with 31st March 1994, to £100,000;

(b) in the case of the period of one year beginning with 1st April 1994, to the sum of £100,000 but increased by the appropriate percentage for that period and (if the resulting amount is not a whole number of pounds) rounded to the nearest pound; and

(c) in the case of each subsequent period of one year beginning with 1st April, to the available amount for the previous period but increased by the appropriate percentage for the subsequent period and (if the resulting amount is not a whole number of pounds) rounded to the nearest pound.

(5) Sub-paragraphs (6) and (7) of paragraphs 1 above shall apply for the purposes of this paragraph as they apply for the purposes of that paragraph.

3. Any claims for financial assistance under this Resolution are to be made to the Accounting Officer of the House; and a party claiming such assistance shall

(a) furnish that Officer with a statement of the facts on which the claim is based;

(b) certify to that Officer that the expenses in respect of which the assistance is claimed have been incurred exclusively in relation to the party's Parliamentary business; and

(c) as soon as practicable after each 31st March following the passing of this Resolution, furnish that Officer with the certificate of an independent professional auditor to the effect that all expenses in respect of which the party claimed financial assistance during the period ending with that day were incurred as mentioned in paragraph (b) above.

4.—(1) In the case of any year in which there is a General Election

(a) the period ending immediately before the date of the Election and

(b) the period beginning with that date,

shall be treated for the purposes of paragraphs 1(1) and (2), 2(1) to (3) and 3 above as separate periods.

(2) In relation to any such separate period

(a) the first relevant amount and the second relevant amount for that period shall be a proportionate part (rounded to the nearest penny) of the first relevant amount and the second relevant amount for the year in question; and

(b) the available amount for that period shall be a proportionate part (rounded to the nearest pound) of the available amount for the year in question.

(3) In relation to any such separate period ending immediately before the date of the Election, paragraph 3(c) above shall have effect as if the 31st March referred to were a reference to the day immediately before the date of the Election.

(4) In this paragraph "year" means a year beginning with 1st April.

5. The cost of providing financial assistance shall be borne on the House of Commons: Members' salaries etc. Vote.

Clinical Waste Incineration (Letchworth)

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Andrew Mitchell.]*

9.57 pm

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): I am grateful to have the opportunity to raise an issue of great concern to my constituents in Letchworth. The issue also concerns the residents of Stotfold and Arlesey in Bedfordshire. My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Sir N. Lyell) has asked me to say that he supports the concerns which I will outline tonight. My right hon. Friend's constituents attended a recent meeting where between 500 and 600 people objected to a clinical waste incineration plant which is being proposed for Letchworth.

The Hertfordshire county council is presently considering the application for permission to build the clinical waste incinerator in Stotfold road close to a school and a housing estate. I have never known the people of Letchworth to be so united as they are in opposing the proposal.

I have lived in this constituency for many years, and the people of Letchworth are outraged at the idea. Letchworth was the world's first garden city. Conceived by Ebenezer Howard in 1903, it has gone on to become a milestone of town planning, with designated areas for each and every activity—shopping, housing, industrial development and agriculture, all in a leafy garden environment. That vision has now reached its final realisation, and there are 30,000 residents.

Because of this legacy, Letchworth has large areas of green belt comprising more than 50 per cent. of the town——

It being Ten o'clock, the motion for the Adjornment of the House lapsed, without Question put,

Motion made, and Question again proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Andrew Mitchell.]*

Mr. Heald: Because of its legacy, Letchworth is seen by town planners the world over as a paradigm and it has been much imitated. To the people of Letchworth the green belt is a vital protective barrier for its heritage, a fact recognised by this House in the 1962 legislation that set up the Letchworth garden city corporation to be a guardian of Letchworth's heritage. Because of the supervisory role of the Department, I know that the Minister is aware of the work that the corporation has done over the years to protect Letchworth from the wrong sort of development. The corporation adamantly opposes the planning proposal that is before Hertfordshire county council.

Equally, North Hertfordshire district council has a long-standing policy of defending the green belt around Letchworth. It received the initial application; it rejected it, with the support of every civic group in the town.

Two public meetings have been packed to the doors. More than 1,000 people attended, a large petition was presented to the county council, and a petition to the House of Commons will be presented in due course.

I have received numerous letters which I have passed on to the Minister in which local people set out their concerns. By way of expressing their flavour, I would like to read out a letter sent me by two young people from Letchworth:

"Dear Mr. Heald,

Darren and I have made up a rap because we want you to know how we feel about the incinerator. We don't want the incinerator anywhere near Letchworth.

This is a rap for Oliver Heald,
They're going to build an incinerator on the field,
On the field there are some trees
Houses and people, all of these
We want to keep our town niee and clean,
So don't bring an incinerator on this green.
You'll poison the trees so don't do it!
If you care about nature, don't build an incinerator."

I have also had letters from local doctors. This one was from one of the largest practices in Letchworth:

"We, the undersigned, being the partners and employees of this group practice, wish to inform you that we are all very strongly opposed to the proposal to build a waste disposal incinerator so close to Letchworth Garden City. We oppose this on environmental, health and historic grounds and we feel that this proposal should be immediately abandoned."

I have had many other letters like it.

Why are the people of Letchworth so opposed to the incinerator? From the school and the housing estate next to the proposed scheme, there is a view across a green valley. That view will be interrupted by a 75 ft chimney and a large laundry building, and it is suggested that steam and other emissions will also cloud the view, thereby destroying part of the green belt barrier around the town.

Secondly, there will be increased traffic and noise. Residents are aware of the experience of Hillingdon, where a similar plant has caused an outcry resulting in a petition to, and a debate in, this House.

Mr. Michael Shersby (Uxbridge): In support of my hon. Friend, I have the misfortune to have a hospital incinerator in my constituency, which is operated by Clinical Energy. It is a most unsuitable activity for a residential area, which results in noise, a considerable increase in traffic caused by large lorries delivering clinical waste and my constituents being unable to sit in their gardens to enjoy quiet summer evenings. It also results in emissions that can lead to atmospheric pollution. All those matters should be of concern to Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution. I have made numerous representations to HMIP on behalf of a group of my constituents who call themselves Residents Against Incinerator Nuisance, as my hon. Friend the Minister knows.

My hon. Friend has my strongest possible support in opposing that especial activity. The incineration of clinical waste should be carried out well away from residential areas.

Mr. Heald: I am most grateful to my hon. Friend for setting that scene. I do not want my constituents to suffer that sort of nuisance, noise and health worry, and that is why I have brought the matter to the attention of the House.

It is fair to point out that, although the people who set up such clinical waste facilities are often the first to say that they are as safe as can be, they do not live next to such facilities and do not have the misery of being in their garden in summer while steam belches from a nearby chimney. The House should seriously consider the suggestion of my hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Shersby) that there should be some scheme that keeps such facilities away from residential areas where there are schools and, in this case, also an educational farm.

There is also cause to worry because there is considerable uncertainty about the health implications of such facilities. The Royal Commission on Environmental Waste, under Sir John Houghton, reported in May:

"We believe it is right nevertheless to continue to maintain a cautious and questioning attitude towards the possibility of health effects from incineration plants"

If there is that need for a cautious and questioning attitude towards the possible health effects of such incineration plants, they should not be sited in areas near to housing estates or where young children go to school.

The Hillingdon plant to which my hon. Friend referred has not met the standards for emissions of dioxin set by the HMIP. That plant has been put forward in the planning application as the direct comparator—the reference site. When the royal commission considered the question, it admitted that it did not have a full understanding of the effects of highly toxic dioxin on humans. It recommended that, as further evidence on the toxicity of dioxin becomes available, its implications should be kept under continuing surveillance by the chief medical officers. In the light of that uncertainty, surely there should be a policy to site incineration plants away from housing areas.

My constituents and I are looking for three responses. We want the county council to reject the planning application. It has said that the green belt is not an overriding issue in the application. To the objectors and me that is an unsustainable argument. The idea of a green belt is to protect the heritage of towns such as Letchworth—a garden city or something special—and also to guard the countryside surrounding it. If the green belt is not an overriding issue in a town such as Letchworth—a town planning model that is copied the world over—how can it ever be an issue that will have overriding importance?

I see that my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General, who supports the objectors in Stotfold and Arlesey who have recently protested about the scheme, is in his place.

If the county council will not reject the scheme, the Secretary of State should call in the application so that there can be a full public inquiry to examine the issues that I have raised, and national issues. Those are issues such as: should the green belt be allowed to be breached in such circumstances; should incineration plants which deal with chemical waste and which give rise to uncertainties about health implications be built close to houses?

I ask the Minister to comment on the national situation in the context of clinical waste schemes and their future planning. We know that county councils are being encouraged to formulate waste plans, but they seem to be slow in doing it. Councillors seemed keen for Hertfordshire county council to decide that the green belt at Letchworth should not be an overriding consideration. One wonders what the county councillors were thinking at the time. Perhaps they were thinking, "It won't be in my part of Hertfordshire."

The strategic view must be that clinical waste incineration will be carried out away from houses and not in a green belt, and that it will be carried out safely. The Minister should comment on that and on current progress, so that other towns do not suffer the agony that Letchworth and villages close by are going through while waiting for the result of the application.

The people of Letchworth say a resounding no to this application. The people of the neighbouring villages say the same, and so do I. The application will be fought tooth and nail and will be resisted in every possible way. I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister and the county council will take that message on board.

10.11 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Tony Baldry): My hon. Friend the Member for Hertfordshire, North (Mr. Heald) has raised issues of understandable concern to his constituents over proposals for a clinical waste incinerator at Letchworth, and I welcome the opportunity to respond. I am sure that my comments will also interest my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General, who is the Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Sir N. Lyell). My right hon. and learned Friend has raised similar concerns on behalf of his constituents. As was evident from the interventions by my hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Shersby) these issues extend beyond Hertfordshire.

The proposal for a clinical waste incinerator at Letchworth is the subject of an application for planning permission which is currently before Hertfordshire county council. It has the responsibility for determining applications involving waste disposal matters, rather than district or borough councils which normally have responsibility for deciding all other applications for planning permission.

The application has been made by Blue Circle Waste Management Ltd and it involves the erection of a 12 m high building with a 25 m chimney on land at Letchworth sewage works. I understand that the incinerator is intended to burn medical waste—including low-level radioactive waste, seized materials—such as drugs—and confidential waste, which is authorised through Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution.

I understand that Hertfordshire Liberal Democrat county council has requested further information from the applicants about the proposed incinerator, and more particularly about the potential environmental impact of this type of development in the location proposed. The applicants are now considering that request. The application is still at a comparatively early stage.

It might be helpful to explain the framework of land use that is provided by the town and country planning system. That aims to secure the most efficient and effective use of land in the public interest, and to ensure that service facilities such as roads, schools and sewers are built where they are needed.

Planning decisions on proposals to build land or to change its use are usually made by the local authorities. We believe that it is appropriate that decisions should normally be taken at the local level. It is therefore important that local authorities fulfil their responsibilities and take decisions on local planning matters, even if these may be difficult.

Such decisions should be rational and consistent. They must also be considered against the policies adopted by the authority after public consultation on its local plan. Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 introduced by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 requires decisions to be in accordance with the development plan, unless material consideration indicate otherwise. Therefore, the development plan is, and will increasingly become, an important document.

Development plans set out the local planning authority's policies and the proposals for the development and use of land in its area. There is a cascade of planning policy guidance from national and regional guidance to the county structure plan and ultimately the district-wide local plan. Therefore, the development plan provides a clear guide to prospective applicants for planning permission to the kinds of development that will or will not be permitted during the plan period. Both county structure and district-wide local plans involve the public through consultation at all stages of the plan preparation process.

For most local plans, a public local inquiry is held to consider objections to the local planning authority's published proposals before an independent inspector appointed by, but not accountable to, the Secretary of State. The inspector reports to the local authority, and its published decisions based on this advice are subject to further public consultation. That ensures that the local plan has been prepared with full local participation and helps to give confidence to local people in the consistency of planning decisions.

I was particularly pleased to see that North Hertfordshire district council has recently adopted the latest alteration to its local plan and is already making good progress with a further revision to extend the plan period. In general circumstances, planning decisions are taken against the background of the local plan. However, as I said, decisions on waste disposal are taken strategically by the county council.

Provision for waste disposal facilities also need to be planned at a strategic level. My hon. Friend is right. If decisions are taken at a strategic level, there must be a strategic plan. Such decisions cannot be taken on an ad hoc basis, and that is why it is right for county councils to have a proper strategic waste plan, just as, where they have other responsibilities—for example, for minerals—it must be right that they have a comprehensive plan for those.

I urge every local authority that has responsibility for strategic waste plans to ensure that its plans are up to date. Waste regulation authorities are required, under the Environmental Protection Act, 1990 to draw up separate waste disposal plans which consider the need for waste facilities within their areas and the technical aspects of possible methods of treatment and disposal. Planning authorities are required to have regard to the waste disposal plan in drawing up development plans, so that they reflect the need for adequate and appropriate waste facilities. Again, it is important that there is an effective waste disposal plan. Without one to cover the whole county, it is difficult for the district authorities to have their development plans in place.

I appreciate that plans for waste incinerators can lead to concerns among local residents that it is understandable that they should seek assurances about safety and the impact of their neighbourhood. Therefore, I understand why that has prompted my hon. Friend's constituents to ask the Secretary of State for the Environment to call in the application for his own determination and hold a public inqury.

It might be helpful if I explain that the Secretary of State usually intervenes in the determination of planning applications very selectively. We continue to be very selective about calling in cases for our decision, and applications will in general be called in only if planning issues of more than local importance are involved. Such cases may include, for example, those that could have wide effects beyond their immediate locality and which give rise to substantial regional or national controversy.

The fact that a planning application is highly controversial locally is not of itself a justification for the Secretary of State to call it in. Parliament has charged local authorities with the responsibility for development control

along with many other important administrative decisions. It must be right that, as far as possible, local authorities discharge the responsibility that has been given to them by Parliament.

Local authorities are democratically elected organisations, accountable to their electorate for their decisions. We consider that it would imply unnecessary central control if a large number of decisions on planning applications were taken by the Secretary of State rather than the local authority. The Secretary of State will therefore intervene only where there are compelling reasons to do so.

It may be helpful if I say that, during the past few years, the number of matters that have been called in by the Secretary of State for his own decision has averaged about 100 a year—about two a week. While the Secretary of State may have a role to play where applications are referred to him as a departure from the development plan, he will not intervene on planning applications simply because the local planning authority finds the decision difficult, complex or of local controversy. He will only exercise his reserve powers of intervention sparingly, where there are compelling and wider reasons to do so.

As far as the present application is concerned, I will of course keep in close touch with developments. It is only right that the county council should be given the opportunity to exercise its responsibility as planning authority and to consider all aspects of the scheme before the Secretary of State considers whether he should intervene. If, after considering all the information, the county council is minded to approve the application, it may refer it to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State as a departure from the development plan. In those circumstances, as in all circumstances where cases are referred to us as a departure from the development plan, the Secretary of State will consider very carefully whether it is an application which would be appropriate for him to call in.

There are many reasons why an application might be a departure from the development plan. In this case, there may well be green belt considerations. Alternatively, should the county council refuse to grant permisssion, the applicants would have a right of appeal to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State against the decision.

In those circumstances, I am sure that my hon. Friend will understand that it would not be appropriate for me to comment in detail on the merits of the application or the issues involved, because to do so might prejudice any decision that might be taken by my right hon. Friend—for example, whether to call in the application at some period during the process. If the county council were to refuse it and it came before the Secretary of State on appeal, obviously it is important that his decision should in no way have been prejudiced earlier.

It may be helpful if I say a little about waste management, because, as we learn more about the environment and the balance that needs to be maintained between our activities and the earth's ecosystem, we recognise the need to maintain at the highest level the environmental and health standards to be achieved by our industries. That applies to the waste management industry as much as to any other industry.

Incineration standards are stringent, as are those for landfill. The new system of integrated pollution control introduced under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 covers larger incineration plants of all types. The incineration of specific types of waste, and all incinerators rated at 1 tonne an hour or more are controlled by HMIP. The integrated pollution control system also allows authorisations to be periodically reviewed to ensure that operators are incorporating technical advances in their pollution control system.

In the past, most hospital waste has been dealt with by incinerators located within the hospital grounds. With the closure of many old hospital incinerators, hospitals are having to consider the most appropriate means of disposal for the considerable quantities of clinical waste that are being produced and that is leading to further consideration being given to other methods of treatment, including autoclaving and microwaving, which are capable of rendering safe some types of infectious hospital waste.

For many types of hospital waste, however, incineration will remain the most appropriate disposal method. The high standards required for incinerators generally apply equally to incinerators burning clinical waste. All incinerators will be required to meet the stringent standards currently in force under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which are rigorously enforced by HMIP.

Of course I heard the comments of my hon. Friend for Uxbridge and I will certainly ensure that HMIP investigates the concern he has raised this evening. It is obviously of vital importance that, if there is the statutory framework of the Environmental Protection Act and a regulatory body, HMIP, with responsibility for these matters, there is public confidence that the statutory framework and regulatory authority are delivering that which Parliament has entrusted them to deliver.

I am satisfied that, in addition to the planning process, adequate legislative safeguards are in place to ensure proper implementation and operation of this type of development under the Environmental Protection Act through the authorisation by HMIP.

I make those comments without prejudice to the particular application that is of concern to my hon. Friend. However, I consider it wholly proper that the proposals for a clinical waste incinerator at Letchworth should be fully considered by Hertfordshire county council. Parliament has given the responsibility of determining the application to Hertfordshire county council which must consider the application fully before my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State decides whether he should call in the application.

My hon. Friend can assure his constituents that I will continue to monitor progress on this application very carefully and stand ready to intervene at the appropriate time should the need arise.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-six minutes past Ten o'clock.

House of Commons

Friday 5 November 1993

The House met at half-past Nine o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners:
The House went:—and, having returned:

Royal Assent

10.10 am

Madam Speaker: I have to acquaint the House that the House has been to the House of Peers where a Commission under the Great Seal was read, authorising the Royal Assent to the following Acts:

Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993
European Parliamentary Elections Act 1993
Cardiff Bay Barrage Act 1993
Railways Act 1993
Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993
Scottish Land Court Act 1993
Health Service Commissioners Act 1993
Probation Service Act 1993
Pension Schemes Act 1993
Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Act 1993
Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1993
European Economic Area Act 1993
Woodgrange Park Cemetery Act 1993
Citibank International Act 1993
Unibank Act 1993
Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993
Ordination of Women (Financial Provisions) Measure 1993

Prorogation

Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech

Madam Speaker: I have further to acquaint the House that the Lord High Chancellor, one of the Lord Commissioners, delivered Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, in pursuance of Her Majesty's Command. For greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy and also directed that the terms of the speech be printed in the Votes and Proceedings. Copies are being made available in the Vote Office.

The Gracious Speech was as follows:

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

The Duke of Edinburgh and I were pleased to receive the State Visits of His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei and Her Majesty the Raja Isteri in November 1992 and His Excellency the President of the Portuguese Republic and Senhora Soares in April 1993. We look forward to receiving the State Visit of His Majesty the Agong of Malaysia and Her Majesty the Raja Permaisuri this month. We were saddened by the death in July of Baudouin, King of the Belgians, after a reign of 42 years.

The Duke of Edinburgh and I remember with pleasure our State Visits to Malta in May, France in June and Germany in October 1992. I was also pleased to visit the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in May, and I remember with satisfaction my Visit to Canada in June 1992. We were pleased to pay a State Visit to Hungary in May of this year; and to be present on the occasion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Cyprus, and to visit the Republic of Cyprus, in October.

My Government have continued to make provision for the defence of the United Kingdom, including a substantial contribution to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and to United Nations operations. They contributed to the successful outcome of the negotiations on the Chemical Weapons Convention. They began implementation of a programme to assist the safe and secure transport of nuclear weapons due for dismantling in the former Soviet Union.

My Government welcomed the Presidents of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Turkmenistan and Lithuania on official visits. My Government contributed to international action to assist the countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, in particular their efforts to improve the safety of their civil nuclear plants.

My Government worked for a peaceful solution to the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, and gave full support to the efforts of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, under Lord Owen and Mr. Stoltenberg. They made a substantial contribution to international efforts to provide humanitarian relief to all those in need, particularly through the deployment of troops with the United Nations protection force.

My Government ratified the Treaty of Maastricht in August. My Government ran a successful Presidency of the European Community in the second half of 1992. My Government brought the mid-term review of the Common Fisheries Policy to a satisfactory conclusion.

At the European Council at Our Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh, My Government successfully concluded the Single Market in all essential respects and reached agreements on future financing arrangements for the Community, on practical procedures for implementing the principle of subsidiarity, on a decision on Denmark which cleared the way for their second referendum and for Danish ratification of the Maastricht Treaty; and on the opening of accession negotiations with Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

My Government have continued to work within the community to ensure the effective operation of the Single Market and to promote budgetary discipline. My Government have helped to secure important changes in the Common Agricultural Policy.

In June, the European Council at Copenhagen agreed that Central European Associate countries would, if they wished, become members of the Community as soon as they were ready.

In Northern Ireland My Government have maintained their efforts to combat terrorism and to address social and economic issues. They have worked constructively with the government of the Republic of Ireland under the Anglo-Irish Agreement. They have also continued to encourage political progress and to promote talks involving the two Governments and the main Northern Ireland parties. My Government have continued to fight terrorism elsewhere.

Members of the House of Commons

I thank you for the provision you have made for the honour and dignity of the Crown and for the public service.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

My Government have pursued firm financial policies which have successfully reduced inflation and brought about a resumption of economic growth, despite difficult trading conditions elsewhere in Europe.

Legislation has been enacted to reduce the budget deficit and help ensure that the recovery is sustained. My Government have also implemented various measures to benefit business, tackle unemployment and foster the recovery. These have included substantial improvements in the provision of export credit and other positive steps to help exporters. A new control system has been put in place to ensure that the share of national income taken by public sector spending is reduced over the medium term.

An Act has been passed to establish a National Lottery which will generate additional funding for the arts, sport, the heritage and charities.

Legislation has been passed which will enable the criminal law to deal more effectively with financial crime, strengthen the powers of the courts to confiscate the proceeds of crime and provide more discretion for the courts in determining the appropriate sentence in particular cases.

An Act has been passed which puts into place the legislative framework for My Government's policies of choice and diversity in education.

Legislation has been passed to enable the private sector operate railway services as part of My Government's commitment to increasing the role of the railways in meeting the country's transport needs.

Legislation has been passed to enable British Coal to play its full role in preparation for privatisation.

An Act has been passed to ensure the continued availability of terrorism insurance.

Legislation has been enacted to maintain an additional rebate for holders of personal pensions aged 30 and over to ensure that wide choice and flexibility continue.

An Act has been passed to fulfil a commitment to disabled people by setting up and funding two replacement Trusts for the Independent Living Fund, and by ensuring continued funding for the Motability scheme.

Legislation has been passed to enable applications for asylum in the United Kingdom to be determined quickly and effectively and to amend the law relating to immigration appeals.

An Act has been passed to facilitate the work of the Parliamentary Boundary Commission.

Legislation has been enacted to increase United Kingdom representation in the European Parliament.

Legislation has been enacted to extend the main elements of the Single European Market to most Member States of the European Free Trade Association.

Legislation has been passed to promote improvements in agricultural marketing.

An Act has been passed to give new rights to leaseholders and to public sector tenants, and to establish an Urban Regeneration Agency.

An Act has been passed to give new employment rights to individuals and to reform the law on trade unions.

For Scotland measures have been enacted to amend the laws relating to bankruptcy and early release of prisoners.

An Act has been passed for the establishment of a statutory Welsh Language Board and the introduction of Welsh Language policies by public bodies serving Wales. Legislation has been enacted to authorise the construction of the Cardiff Bay Barrage.

An Act has been passed to introduce a new pension scheme for the judiciary and to reduce the judicial retirement age to 70.

Other important measures have been enacted.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may attend you.

Thereafter a Commission for proroguing the Parliament was read, after which the Lord Chancellor said:

"My Lords and Members of the House of Commons: by virtue of Her Majesty's Commission which has now been read, we do, in Her Majesty's name, and in obedience to Her Majesty's Commands prorogue this Parliament to Thursday the eighteenth day of this instant November, to be then here holden and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued to Thursday the eighteenth day of this instant November."

End of the First Session (opened on 27 April 1992) of the Fifty-First Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in the Forty-First Year of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 1 November 1993

ENVIRONMENT

Packaging

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) if he will make representations to the European Community to secure that the European directive on packaging and packaging waste is amended *(a)* to include reference to measures to encourage the use of reusable packaging, *(b)* to delete arbitrary assertions of equivalence and to secure that priority is given to source reduction, reuse and recycling in that order and *(c)* to ensure that consumer information and labelling distinguishes packaging for which there is an established recycling route;

(2) if he will make representations to the European Community to secure the inclusion of a timetable for the reduction of waste at source within the European directive on packaging and packaging waste;

(3) if he will make representations to the European Community to ensure that those parts of the proposed directive on packaging and packaging waste setting standards for packaging systems are also applied to packaging exported from member states to non-EC countries;

(4) if he will make representations to the European Community to secure that information submitted under article 8 and annex III of the European directive on packaging and packaging waste includes information on toxic substances;

(5) if he will make representations to the European Community to secure that the European directive on packaging and packaging waste is amended to include *(a)* specific targets for the recycling of collected material, *(b)* targets for reuse and source reduction and *(c)* measures to increase the proportion of recycled materials used in packaging.

Mr. Yeo: The Government support the proposed directive as a means of harmonising the basis on which member states take measures relating to packaging and packaging waste, in order to avoid distortion to competition and restrictions to trade. We also see the proposal as environmentally beneficial. We have argued strongly for the directive to establish broad targets which are both realistic and challenging and for it to contain sufficient flexibility for individual member states to choose the waste management option which makes most sense in the light of local circumstance.

The directive proposed by the Commission establishes an overall target for the recovery of waste packaging and sets out specific targets for material recycling. The Government accept the concept of a waste management hierarchy which covers reduction, re-use, recycling and energy recovery and final disposal, in that order, but do not believe that it makes environmental or economic sense to impose it rigidly in all cases. There will be some circumstances where the economic and environmental considerations point to an option towards the bottom of the hierarchy. We therefore oppose the incorporation of a rigid hierarchy in the directive and the inclusion of specific targets or timetables for individual aspects of the hierarchy. These could prevent the choice of the most appropriate option in individual cases. We believe that it would be more sensible to adopt a general target for recovery and allow local decisions on what constitutes the best combination of management options in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

The proposed directive also establishes a regime of essential requirements with which packaging must conform and ensures free circulation for packaging which conforms with the requirements. It requires the creation of mechanisms to ensure that suitable information is provided so that consumers and producers can contribute to the attainment of its objectives and to assist in compliance monitoring. We believe that it is essential for those mechanisms, relating either to the marking of packaging material to the provision of information to consumers, or to providing data for monitoring performance against the directive's objectives, to be as simple and clear as possible. They should take into account other national or EC legislation dealing, for example, with safety, performance or quality issues. Furthermore these requirements should be established in a manner which facilitates trade within the European Community and with other countries and takes account of the need for standards to be set in a world-wide context.

We believe that the pragmatic approach we have adopted during the negotiation of the directive has support among many of our EC partners and that many of our concerns are being taken on board. There remain significant difficulties with the amended proposal and we will be continuing to press for further changes before we can consider the text to be acceptable; we do, however, believe that the negotiations are going in the right direction and that we now have the foundations for a successful outcome.

Homelessness

Dr. Twinn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans the Government have to make all providers of social housing statutorily responsible for providing accommodation for the homeless; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: In a reply to the hon. Member for Greenwich (Mr. Raynsford) on 21 October, *Official Report*, column *281*, I said that the Government propose to reform the homelessness legislation. We will be consulting about our proposals in due course.

Power Stations

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the anti-pollution equipment that is installed at the *(a)* Ince, Merseyside and *(b)* Richborough, Kent power stations.

Mr. Yeo: Both power stations are currently fitted with electrostatic precipitators to reduce emissions of particulate matter to atmosphere. In respect of other emissions, the authorisations recently issued by Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution require the operator to provide, by 1 April 1994, an improvement plan using

BATNEEC—best available techniques not entailing excessive cost—to bring the stations up to the standards appropriate for new plant.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consideration he is giving under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to rescinding the order to burn orimulsion at the *(a)* Ince, Merseyside and *(b)* Richborough, Kent power stations; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: Part I of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 requires the inclusion of conditions in authorisations designed to prevent or minimise pollution of the environment and prohibits HMIP from granting an authorisation unless it is satisfied that an operator will be able to comply with such conditions.

Authorisations allowing the burning of orimulsion at these power stations were issued by Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution on 30 July 1993. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no reason to believe that they were not granted in accordance with the requirements of the Act and has no plans therefore to direct that they should be revoked.

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Alan W. Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of how far the duties and powers of the Director General of Gas Supply are sufficient duties to enable the post to assist the Government fully in achieving their declared international commitments on carbon emission reductions.

Mr. Yeo: Using his existing powers as prescribed by the Gas Act 1986, the Director General of Gas Supply has introduced changes to the gas supply tariff formula—the "E factor"—which have already permitted funding of two initial energy efficiency schemes of Energy Saving Trust. The trust's target of achieving, through energy efficiency measures, annual fuel savings equivalent to 2·5 million tonnes carbon emissions by 2000 will form an important part of the Government's national programme on CO_2 emissions.

Council Housing

Mr. Thurnham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list those councils whose tenants have voted in favour of a new approved landlord from the private sector; what is the number and value of the properties; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: The tenants of 30 local authorities have voted in favour of the large scale voluntary transfer of the ownership of all or most of their council's housing stock to registered housing associations. Of these, the following 23 councils have already transferred all or most of their stock:

	Number of dwellings transferred	*Transfer price £ million*
Breckland DC	6,781	60·2
Broadland DC	3,721	25·1
London Borough of Bromley	12,393	117·6
Chiltern DC	4,650	32·9
Christchurch DC	1,621	15·4
East Cambridgeshire DC	4,266	31·5
East Dorset DC	2,245	21·6
Hambleton DC	4,268	33·5
Medina DC	2,825	27·9
Mid Sussex DC	4,426	44·2
Newbury DC	7,053	47·0
North Bedfordshire DC	7,472	64·3
Rochester upon Medway DC	8,029	77·0
Ryedale DC	3,353	28·3
Sevenoaks DC	6,526	65·5
South Buckinghamshire DC	3,319	34·0
South Wight DC	2,119	22·8
Suffolk Coastal DC	5,272	34·0
Surrey Heath DC	2,885	28·7
Swale DC	7,352	55·2
Tonbridge and Malling DC	6,382	54·4
Tunbridge Wells DC	5,519	58·1
West Dorset DC	5,279	40·3

The remaining seven councils listed below have not yet transferred their stock, but are expected to submit applications to do so by the end of March 1994:

	Number of dwellings to be transferred
Epsom and Ewell DC	1,773
Hart DC	2,504
Havant DC	3,587
Hertsmere DC	6,383
Leominster DC	1,874
Penwith DC	3,413
South Ribble DC	3,600

The transfer price for these dwellings is not yet known.

In addition, tenants in the City of Westminster and London borough of Merton have voted in favour of two tenants' choice transfers involving a total of 830 dwellings. In both of these cases the stock had a negative value, and a disposal cost was paid to the new approved landlord.

The progress of the large-scale voluntary transfer programme is very encouraging. Large-scale voluntary transfer can bring advantages to existing and future tenants, local authorities and council tax payers and I would like to see a continuing programme in future. There are also a number of tenants' choice transfers in the pipeline, four of which are well advanced.

Local Government Boundaries

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 25 October, *Official Report*, column *414*, whether the Local Government Commission requested at any stage a variation in his direction on the North Yorkshire review to include the West Craven area of Lancashire.

Mr. Baldry: No.

Elections, Avon

Dr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he expects that elections will be held for the new unitary authorities in Avon.

Mr. Baldry: Decisions about the implementation date for any changes to local government structure in Avon are dependent on the nature of the Local Government Commission's final recommendations for the area. We

expect the Commission to make its final report on Avon, Gloucestershire and Somerset to my right hon. Friend in January 1994.

Cash Limits

Mr. Peter Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what proposals he has to change his Department's cash limits and running costs limit for 1993-94.

Mr. Gummer: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimates, the following changes will be made:

(i) the cash limit for Class VII, Vote 5 (Central Environmental Services etc.) will be increased by £663,000 from £390,673,000 to £391,336,000. The increase provides for the transfer of responsibility for the Oslo Commission from MAFF to DoE, for additional resources for the Environmental Action Fund, for additional grant in aid for the United Kingdom Ecolabelling Board, for additional provision for Energy Efficiency, and for additional expenditure on the Environmental Protection research programme;

(ii) the cash limit for Class VII, Vote 8 (Revenue Support Grant, payments of non-domestic rates, Valuation Office Services, etc., England) will be decreased by £54,000 from £28,808,833,000 to £28,808,779,000. This reflects the transfer of savings from the Valuation Tribunals subhead to Class VII, Vote 12, subhead D1: Emergency financial assistance to local authorities;

(iii) The DoE/UA non-voted cash limit will be increased by £33,765,000 from £962,907,000 to £996,672,000. Capital End-Year Flexibility take up of £28,255,000 will fund Docklands Light Railway, deferred Local Authority claims for City Challenge and other deferred claims for Derelict Land Grant. Increases totalling £47,814,000 are necessary to establish the Urban Regeneration Agency, to cover additional expenditure on the Manchester Olympic Bid and for Urban Development Corporations to carry out redevelopment and reclamation work.

These increases will be offset by savings, transfers, and retained PES and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

PSA Businesses

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what changes he proposes to make to the cash limit on the sale of the PSA Businesses vote in 1993-94.

Mr. Curry: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the cash limit for class VII, vote 13 will be increased by £38,950,000 from £401,000 to £39,351,000. The increase will not constitute a claim on the Reserve as it will be netted off the proceeds from the Government's privatisation programme.

The provision is sought mainly to fund the subscription of shares and other expenses in connection with the sale of the five building management businesses to the private sector during September and October 1993; partly offset by an increase in receipts representing that part of the proceeds of sale payable in 1993-94.

Landfill Waste

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what amendments Her Majesty's Government have proposed to the draft proposal of the European Commission for a Council directive on the landfill of waste.

Mr. Yeo: The draft proposal for a Council directive on the landfill of waste was introduced by the European Commission in May 1991. An amended proposal was produced in June this year following the European Parliament's opinion. The present proposal was drawn up before the principle of subsidiarity was strengthened in the Maastricht treaty and endorsed at the Edinburgh Council and is very detailed and prescriptive. That principle requires that Community legislation deals only with issues that can be better attained at the level of the Community than at the level of individual member states. Accordingly the proposed directive fails the subsidiarity test.

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when the European Community directive on the landfill of waste will be implemented.

Mr. Yeo: The Belgian presidency of the European Community is giving priority to the draft proposal for a Council directive on the landfill of waste. Considerable negotiations lie ahead and it is not yet clear when Council will be able to agree a common position. The present draft requires member states to take the necessary steps to comply with the directive within one year of its notification.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what he currently considers to be the best environmental disposal option for large items of bulky decommissioning waste such as nuclear submarine reactor compartments.

Mr. Yeo: The Government's position was set out in the White Paper, "This Common Inheritance" (Cm. 1200). This said that the Government had not ruled out sea disposal for large items such as boilers, but would keep under review whether this disposal option needed to be maintained. Decommissioning wastes from nuclear-propelled submarines are a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence.

Methane

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what research has been carried out into methane migration at *(a)* open and *(b)* closed waste rubbish tips (i) in England and Wales, (ii) the London borough of Havering, (iii) the borough of Thurrock and (iv) the district of Basildon.

Mr. Yeo: Work on the phenomenon of methane migration from landfill sites has been an integral part of the Department's controlled waste management and contaminated land research programmes for many years. Projects have ranged from theoretical modelling, through laboratory work, to site monitoring and investigation. The aim of this work is to provide an improved understanding of landfill gas generation and migration as support for the Department's technical guidance on best practice for gas monitoring and control. None of the research work has been carried out at sites in Havering, Thurrock and Basildon.

Research on methane is also carried out in a programme of work managed by the Construction Industry Research and Information Association jointly funded by the Department and industry.

Housing, Lancashire

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many housing association properties have been built in each local authority area in Lancashire over the last three years for *(a)* general need and *(b)* sheltered housing; and how many properties have been acquired by housing associations and renovated for renting over the same period.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 22 October 1993]:* Estimates of the total numbers of housing association housebuilding completions within each local authority area in Lancashire are shown in the publication "Local Housing Statistics", table 1. Figures for 1990 are in issue No. 101 and for 1991 and 1992 are in issue No. 105.

The Department collects information about specialised housing for the elderly, including sheltered dwellings. Figures of sheltered housebuilding completions for housing associations within individual local authority areas are also shown in "Local Housing Statistics". Annual data for 1990 and 1991 are in issues Nos. 99 (table 10) and 102 (table 11) respectively. Figures for 1992 are to be published shortly in issue No. 106.

Figures for numbers of housing association dwellings which were renovated with local authority loans are shown in "Local Housing Statistics". Figures for 1990 are in issue No. 101 (table 4) and for 1991 and 1992 in issue No. 105 (table 3). The figures for dwellings renovated with funding from the Housing Corporation are not readily available.

Local Government Reform

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is his latest estimate of the sums committed by *(a)* county councils and *(b)* other local authorities in England and Wales on representations about the proposed reform of local government.

Mr. Curry *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* This is a matter for authorities themselves; we have no information on which to base an estimate for England. Local government reorganisation in Wales is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales.

Abandoned Coal Mines

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what discussions he has had with British Coal and the National Rivers Authority about pollution from abandoned coal mines.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* There have been discussions and exchanges of information between my officials and those of the NRA, and between the chairman of the NRA and myself. It is for British Coal in consultation with the NRA to assess any environmental effects of pollution from abandoned mines.

Mineral Planning Guidance Note

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he expects to publish the new draft mineral planning guidance note 3.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* I intend to publish the new draft minerals planning guidance note 3 for public consultation as soon as possible.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Archaeological Site, Bedfordshire

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Attorney-General if he will make a statement on the decision not to prosecute the person caught plundering an archaeological site west of Bedford in June this year.

The Attorney-General: The Director of Public Prosecutions has no knowledge of any case in 1993 in which the CPS has been asked to consider the prosecution of any person for any offence under the Theft Act 1968 or under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 in respect of theft from, or damage to, an archaeological site. A case of this nature which the hon. and learned Member may have in mind was considered in 1991, but no sufficient admissible and reliable evidence was available to found a prosecution.

TRANSPORT

Nuclear Transport

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received regarding the risks of transporting nuclear materials by air, land or sea.

Mr. Norris: During this month my Department has received two questions and three letters from Members of the House of Commons, and four letters from other bodies on the transport of radioactive materials.

M62

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many representations he has received in relation to his proposals for the M62 relief road; and how many such representations have been in favour and how many against.

Mr. Key: On 29 October 732 completed comment sheets, 175 letters and 650 printed pro-formas had been received so far. Most expressed concern about the proposals.

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will hold a public inquiry into all methods of reducing traffic congestion on the M62 motorway.

Mr. Key: If the scheme goes ahead following the public consultation a public inquiry would be held at which alternative solutions would be debated.

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many years after completion of the proposed M62 relief road it is expected that traffic flows will have reached capacity levels on *(a)* the proposed M62 relief road and *(b)* the M62 motorway.

Mr. Key: I expect the design capacity of the M62 motorway to be reached again 15 years after the opening of the relief road. It will be some years after that before the relief road reaches its design capacity.

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what economic appraisal he has made of the proposed M62 relief road using the cost-benefit technique COBA9; and if he will publish the appraisal during the public consultation process ending in February 1994.

Mr. Key: The Department used its standard methodology to produce an economic appraisal for the relief road. This was published as part of the documents available at the consultation exhibition.

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is the average daily traffic flow on the M62 motorway at junction 17.

Mr. Key: A total of 123,400 vehicles per day based on 1992 figures.

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what average daily traffic flow is forecast for the M62 in the opening year of the proposed M62 relief road.

Mr. Key: Average daily traffic flow forecast for M62, between junctions 15 and 17, in the opening year of the relief road is:

low growth—105,600 vehicles per day
high growth—126,000 vehicles per day

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport to what extent the public and elected representatives at local and national level have been consulted over the traffic congestion on the M62 motorway and on possible methods of reducing that congestion other than the proposed M62 relief road.

Mr. Key: Local authorities and others were consulted last year on options for improving transport links across the Pennines. The options, identified in a study commissioned from consultants, were published in the document "Trans-Pennine Study: Strategy Report".

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what average daily traffic flow is forecast for the proposed M62 relief road in the opening year.

Mr. Key: Average daily traffic flow forecast for opening year is:—

	Vehicles per day
Low growth	63,000
High growth	75,200

Jet Aircraft

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on *(a)* the certification requirements and *(b)* the pilot qualification requirements for persons seeking to operate former military fast jet aircraft on the United Kingdom civil register.

Mr. Norris: Aircraft certification requirements and pilot qualification requirements are matters for the Civil Aviation Authority in the first instance. I have therefore passed the hon. Member's question to the chairman of the authority and asked him to write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list all accidents to civil-registered former military fast jet aircraft on the United Kingdom register, since 1980, giving in each case an indication of the number of injuries or fatalities and the cause of the accidents.

Mr. Norris: The records of the Civil Aviation Authority's safety data and analysis unit show that since 1980 there has only been one accident involving a civil registered former military fast jet aircraft on the United Kingdom register. This accident was that which occurred on 11 June 1993 to a Hawker Hunter T7, near Sheffield.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the accident to a civil-registered Hunter T7 aircraft in the Peak district on 13 June.

Mr. Norris: The accident in which a Hawker Hunter T7 crashed in open country northwest of Sheffield, Yorkshire, occurred on 11 June 1993. The only fatality was that of the pilot who died in the crash. My Department's air accident investigation branch carried out a field investigation and has produced a report of this incident. Its analysis suggests that there had been no failure of the aircraft or its systems to explain the accident. There was, however, bad weather on the route of the flight.

A copy of the AAIB's report (AAIB Bulletin No. 10/93 —Ref: EW/C93/6/4) is held in the House of Commons Library.

Road Improvement, London

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list each of the current road improvement programmes covering the Greater London area that qualify for Government funding.

Mr. Norris: The Government are responsible for funding the trunk road improvement programme and provide support for local authority road improvement programmes of more than local significance.

In addition, the Traffic Director for London receives Government funding for the development of the priority (red) route initiative.

M25

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will undertake a study of delays to traffic on the M25 motorway *(a)* distinguishing the causes of all delays over a period of at least three months and *(b)* indicating approximate vehicle or person-hours occasioned by each cause of delay.

Mr. Key: We carry out continuous monitoring of traffic flows and delays on the M25. This information contributes to cost benefit assessments of improvements to the route.

Harwich-Fishguard Link

Mr. Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what information he has about the proposed corridor linking Harwich with Fishguard to be funded in part by the European Community; and whether this will involve the lengthening or enhancing of the M50.

Mr. Key: A route between Harwich and Fishguard forms part of the trans-European road network that has now been agreed within the European Community. The M50 is not part of this route, but it is part of the M4—A449 —A40—M50—M5 TERN route between South Wales and the west midlands. Its inclusion in the network does not involve any lengthening or enhancement.

Unleaded Fuel

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will update the answer to the hon. Member for Peckham (Ms Harman) of 25 February, *Official Report*, columns *692-93*, relating to unleaded fuel and catalytic converters.

Mr. Key: All new cars manufactured since 1 October 1990 have had to be capable of running on unleaded petrol. Of the 1·927 million tonnes of petrol sold in the month of September 1993 53·7 per cent. was unleaded. The number and proportion of older cars converted to use unleaded petrol is unknown. The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders estimates that there are some 2·5 to 3 million cars that cannot be converted out of a total petrol car fleet of some 21 million. Since 31 December 1992 nearly all new petrol-engined cars have been fitted with catalysts. The total number of catalyst car sales to the end of September 1993 was approximately 2·31 million or some 10 per cent. of the total car fleet. The number of car owners who have had a catalyst fitted to their vehicle is unknown, but is estimated to be negligible.

Exhaust Emissions, Wales

Dr. Howells: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will give the number and location of vehicle exhaust emissions testing points in Wales.

Mr. Key: Statutory in-service emission checks on HGVs and PSVs are carried out at the eight vehicle inspectorate testing stations in Wales and at 17 testing stations which are designated for the purposes of testing PSVs. Statutory in-service emission checks on other classes of vehicle are carried out at all 1,132 MOT testing stations in Wales. I will write to the hon. Member with details of the locations.

East Coast Main Line

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proposal has been submitted to his Department for the opening of passenger stations on the east coast main line in Berwickshire.

Mr. Freeman: None, but such proposals would not necessarily need the approval of my Department.

Thurrock Service Area

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what geological surveys were made in relation to the site of the Thurrock service area serving the M25 prior to its construction; and to what extent methane or similar gases were found on the site or in the immediate location.

Mr. Key: The Department was aware that part of the Thurrock motorway service area site had previously been used for landfill waste and studies carried out before bids were invited for its development confirmed the presence of both methane and carbon dioxide. Further studies were carried out by the selected developer before construction began to determine the best method of treatment.

The Department took expert advice, and consulted the relevant authorities, before approving the landfill gas control system and the associated monitoring equipment now installed at the site. The safety of service area users is of paramount importance and the control and monitoring procedures are therefore subject to regular review. I am satisfied that these arrangements provide adequate protection for MSA staff and users.

Taxis, London

Mr. Bendall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ensure that the right of London's taxis to ply freely for hire at railway stations serving London commuters will be maintained following rail privatisation.

Mr. Norris: Following privatisation, British Rail stations will be owned by the new body, Railtrack, which will remain in the public sector for some time. There are no plans to change the Act of 1907 which gives taxis free access to stations within the Metropolitan police district, but this is one of the topics discussed in the consultation paper on the future of taxi and private hire services which was published on 27 October.

A38

Mr. Hicks: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when it is intended work should start on the Dobwalls bypass section of the A38 trunk road improvement between Liskeard and Bodmin; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: Construction of the A38 Liskeard to Bodmin improvement scheme, including a bypass for Dobwalls, could start in the latter part of the decade, depending upon satisfactory completion of the statutory procedures and the availability of funds at the time.

Mr. Hicks: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if it is his intention to give further consideration to a route option through the Glynn valley as part of the consultation procedures for the A38 trunk road improvement between Liskeard and Bodmin; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: We are considering all the responses to the supplementary public consultation on this scheme, including suggestions for an alternative route through the Glynn valley. We hope to announce the preferred solution shortly.

Departmental Offices

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many civil servants are working in his Department's offices at 2 Marsham street.

Mr. Norris: According to the Department's computerised staff record, 1,352 Department of Transport staff are currently employed in 2 Marsham street.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Prison Privatisation

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the prisons in England and Wales that are now being considered by his Department for possible privatisation.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the prison service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated 1 November 1993:

PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IN PRISONS

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the prisons in England and Wales that are now being considered for possible privatisation.

On 2 September 1993 the Home Secretary announced that 10 per cent. of prisons, about 12, are to be managed by the private sector. This total includes the two already operated by the private sector, the new prison at Doncaster, which is due to open next year, and the six new prisons the building of which was announced on 6 October. About three prisons currently managed directly by the Prison Service will therefore need to be brought under private sector management following a market testing programme. As indicated at the time of the September policy announcement, no decision has yet been taken on which prisons will be market tested.

Prisoner Support Groups

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make a statement on the role of voluntary family support groups in respect of the enhancement of family-prisoner links and the successful resettlement of prisoners on release;

(2) how much money and what proportion of the prison service budget was allocated in *(a)* 1991, *(b)* 1992 and *(c)* 1993 to fund prisoners' families support groups.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for these matters has been delegated to the Director General of the prison service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Simon Hughes, dated 1 November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Questions about the role of voluntary support groups in enhancing prisoners' family links, and about the amount and proportion of the Prison Service Budget which has been allocated to prisoners' family support groups in the years 1991 to 1993 inclusive.

The Prison Service gives a high priority towards helping prisoners to maintain close and meaningful links with their families which will help them to resettle in the community on release. We recognise that prisoners' family support groups can play an extremely valuable part in this process.

There is no provision in the Prison Service Vote for making regular grants to these voluntary groups. However, over the two most recently completed financial years the Minister of State has authorised one-off payments totalling £75,000 to assist groups in exceptional circumstances.

Driving Bans

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many lifetime driving bans were imposed by the courts in the years 1991 and 1992; and for what offences.

Mr. Maclean: The information required is published in "Offences relating to motor vehicles England and Wales 1991 Supplementary tables", tables 13 and 14. A copy of this publication can be found in the Library.

The figures for 1992 are not yet available.

Hit and Run Offences

Mr. Gerrrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many recorded incidents of hit and run offences involving injury or death occurred in 1991 and 1992; and in how many cases the driver was not subsequently traced.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Prisoner Transfers

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been transferred *(a)* temporarily and *(b)* permanently from prisons in England and Wales to prisons in Scotland in each of the past three years.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from A. J. Butler to Dr. Norman Godman, dated 1 November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me, in the absence of the Director General from the office, to reply to your recent Question about the number of prisoners transferred to Scotland.

The number of prisoners permanently and temporarily transferred to Scotland, under sections 26 and 27 of the Criminal Justice Act 1961 in the last three years were as follows:

	1990	*1991*	*1992*	*[1]1993*
Temporary	19	18	20	13
Permanent	13	19	18	9

[1] End of September.

Pregnant Prisoners

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many pregnant women were on remand or serving prison sentences in each year since 1987.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the prison service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 1 November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the number of pregnant women who were on remand or serving prison sentences in each year since 1987.

I am afraid that the information you have requested is not available. As you will know from my reply to you on another Question we do know the number of pregnancies which result in a birth during the time a prisoner is on remand or serving a sentence. But we do not know, for example, the number of women prisoners who are pregnant when they are received into custody but are released before their pregnancy has come to term. A women may choose to keep the fact of her pregnancy confidential between her and the doctor. There is no requirement, nor would it be possible, for central records of pregnancies to be kept.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women gave birth while serving a prison sentence or on remand in each of the past five years.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the prison service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 1 November 1993:

Births to Women Serving Prison Sentences or on Remand

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the number of women who have given birth while serving a prison sentence or on remand in each of the past five years.

The annual reports on the work of the Prison Service record the number of women temporarily removed to outside hospitals for delivery and returning to establishments afterwards. The figures are:

	Number
1987-88	75
1988-89	63
1989-90	74
1990-91	65
1991-92	56

In addition there were three deliveries within Prison Service establishments, one in 1987-1988 and two in 1988-1989. We have no records of births having taken place in establishments in recent years.

Crime and Unemployment

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what analysis of the relationship between crime levels and unemployment underlay the statement in his consultation paper, "Disclosure of Criminal Records for Employment Vetting Purposes," on the relative likelihood of reoffending by *(a)* an ex-offender with suitable work and *(b)* one who is unemployed.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The relevant passage says only that commonsense suggests that an ex-offender with suitable work is less likely to re-offend than one who is unemployed. It did not derive from any general analysis of a possible link between levels of crime and unemployment.

British Summer Time

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing the times of sunrise and sunset on 21 December and on the first day of each month in 1994 in *(a)* Lerwick, *(b)* Thurso, *(c)* Stornoway, *(d)* Inverness, *(e)* Aberdeen, *(f)* Dundee, *(g)* Glasgow, *(h)* Edinburgh and *(i)* Stranraer, respectively, under (i) the present arrangements of British summer time and Greenwich mean time and (ii) under BST plus one hour and GMT plus one hour.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The information requested is as follows:

Sunrise and sunset times
Current British summer time arrangements

	21 December 1993	*1994*											
		GMT plus 1 hour from 27 March to 23 October											
	GMT	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
Lerwick													
Sunrise	09.08	09.08	08.20	07.04	06.31	05.53	03.53	03.45	04.43	05.58	17.09	07.27	08.40
Sunset	14.57	15.08	16.17	17.31	19.48	21.03	22.13	22.31	21.37	20.09	18.38	16.09	15.06
Thurso													
Sunrise	09.03	09.04	08.21	07.11	06.42	05.20	04.17	04.10	05.03	06.12	07.18	07.30	08.38
Sunset	15.21	15.31	16.35	17.43	19.55	21.04	22.08	22.25	21.36	20.15	18.49	16.25	15.28
Stornoway													
Sunrise	09.12	09.13	08.31	07.21	06.54	05.33	04.31	04.25	05.17	06.24	07.29	07.40	08.46
Sunset	15.36	15.46	16.48	17.55	20.06	21.14	22.16	22.33	21.45	20.25	19.00	16.38	15.42
Inverness													
Sunrise	08.57	08.58	08.19	07.12	06.47	05.28	04.29	04.23	05.13	06.17	07.20	07.28	08.33
Sunset	15.33	15.43	16.43	17.48	19.57	21.02	22.02	22.18	21.33	20.15	18.52	16.32	15.39
Aberdeen													
Sunrise	08.46	08.48	08.09	07.02	06.38	05.20	04.22	04.17	05.05	06.09	07.11	07.19	08.22
Sunset	15.27	15.36	16.36	17.40	19.47	20.52	21.51	22.06	21.22	20.06	18.44	16.24	15.32
Dundee													
Sunrise	08.45	08.46	08.09	07.05	06.43	05.27	04.31	04.26	05.13	06.15	07.15	07.20	08.21
Sunset	15.35	15.45	16.43	17.45	19.50	20.53	21.49	22.05	21.22	20.08	18.48	16.30	15.40
Glasgow													
Sunrise	08.46	08.48	08.12	07.09	06.49	05.34	04.40	04.36	05.21	06.21	07.19	07.23	08.23
Sunset	15.44	15.54	16.50	17.51	19.55	20.55	21.50	22.05	21.24	20.12	18.53	16.37	15.49
Edinburgh													
Sunrise	08.42	08.44	08.08	07.05	06.44	05.30	04.35	04.31	05.16	06.17	07.15	07.19	08.19
Sunset	15.40	15.49	16.46	17.47	19.51	20.51	21.47	22.02	21.21	20.08	18.49	16.33	15.44
Stranraer													
Sunrise	08.43	08.44	08.11	07.11	06.53	05.41	04.50	04.46	05.29	06.26	07.22	07.23	08.20
Sunset	15.54	16.03	16.57	17.55	19.57	20.55	21.47	22.01	21.23	20.13	18.57	16.44	15.58

Note: Figures reproduced with permission from data supplied by the Science and Engineering Research Council.

Sunrise and sunset times
Single/double summer time (aka central European time)

	21 December 1993	*1994* GMT plus 2 hours from 27 March to 25 September, GMT plus 1 hour the rest of the year											
	GMT +1 hour	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
Lerwick													
Sunrise	10.08	10.08	09.20	08.04	07.31	06.03	04.53	04.45	05.43	06.58	07.09	08.27	09.40
Sunset	15.57	16.08	17.17	18.31	20.48	22.03	23.13	23.31	22.37	21.09	18.38	17.09	16.06
Thurso													
Sunrise	10.03	10.04	09.21	08.11	07.42	06.20	05.17	05.10	06.03	07.12	07.18	08.30	09.38
Sunset	16.21	16.31	17.35	18.43	20.55	22.04	23.08	23.25	22.36	21.15	18.49	17.25	16.28
Stornoway													
Sunrise	10.12	10.13	09.31	08.21	07.54	06.33	05.25	05.25	06.17	07.24	07.29	08.40	09.46
Sunset	16.36	16.46	17.48	18.55	21.06	22.14	23.16	23.33	22.45	21.25	19.00	17.38	16.42
Inverness													
Sunrise	09.57	09.58	09.19	08.12	07.47	06.28	05.29	05.23	06.13	07.17	07.20	08.28	09.33
Sunset	16.33	16.43	17.43	18.48	20.57	22.02	23.02	23.18	22.33	21.15	18.52	17.32	16.39
Aberdeen													
Sunrise	09.46	09.48	09.09	08.02	07.38	06.20	05.22	05.17	06.05	07.09	07.11	08.19	09.22
Sunset	16.27	16.36	17.36	18.40	20.47	21.52	22.51	23.06	22.22	21.06	18.44	17.24	16.32
Dundee													
Sunrise	09.45	09.46	09.09	08.05	07.43	06.27	05.31	05.26	06.13	07.15	07.15	08.20	09.21
Sunset	16.35	16.45	17.43	18.45	20.50	21.53	22.49	23.05	22.22	21.08	18.48	17.30	16.40
Glasgow													
Sunrise	09.46	09.48	09.12	08.09	07.49	06.34	05.40	05.36	06.21	07.21	07.19	08.23	09.23
Sunset	16.44	16.54	17.50	18.51	20.55	21.55	22.50	23.05	22.24	21.12	18.53	17.37	16.49
Edinburgh													
Sunrise	09.42	09.44	09.08	08.05	07.44	06.30	05.35	05.31	06.16	07.17	07.15	08.19	09.19
Sunset	16.40	16.49	17.46	18.47	20.51	21.51	22.47	23.02	22.21	21.08	18.49	17.33	16.44
Stranraer													
Sunrise	09.43	09.44	09.11	08.11	07.53	06.41	05.50	05.46	06.29	07.26	07.22	08.23	09.20
Sunset	16.54	17.03	17.57	18.55	20.57	21.55	22.47	23.01	22.23	21.13	18.57	17.44	16.58

Note: Figures reproduced with permission from data supplied by the Science and Engineering Research Council.

Recreation Grounds

Mr. Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take early action to strengthen the powers of the police and local authorities to prevent or deal with the nuisance and damage arising from unlawful use of motor cycles or other motor vehicles on recreation grounds in public open spaces.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend is satisfied that there are sufficient byelaw-making and enforcement powers available.

Secure Accommodation

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has had from the area criminal justice liaison committee for Mid, South and West Glamorgan, Dyfed and Gwent in relation to secure accommodation for young offenders and remandees.

Mr. Maclean: No such representations have been made directly to the Home Office; but on two occasions—at the end of 1992 and in August 1993—concern about the lack of secure accommodation for juveniles was expressed, respectively by the secretary and chairman of the area committee, in letters to the secretariat of the national Criminal Justice Consultative Council. These concerns were brought to the attention of Government Departments and replies to these letters were sent respectively from the Home Office and the Welsh Office.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date he issued invitations to tender for the secure training centre or centres in Wales; if he will list the principal elements in the specification; what consultations he has had with regard to the drawing up of these specifications; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: Invitations to tender have not yet been issued in relation to any particular site. The time at which any such invitation can be issued will be dependent upon the progress made by the Bill which will be necessary to implement the Government's proposal to introduce secure training orders. Draft specifications for secure training centres were issued on 30 July to potential providers covering separately design and construction, and regime. These specifications were produced with the intention of indicating the likely requirements and to enable those with expertise or experience in dealing with persistent juvenile offenders to offer informed comments. The specifications were drawn up in close consultation with the Department of Health and social services inspectorate and endorsed by an interdepartmental steering group with representation from the Home Office, Department of Health, social services inspectorate, Department for Education, Lord

Chancellor's Department, Treasury and Welsh Office. The content of the specifications was also informed by views submitted as part of an earlier consultation exercise about the scope of the new secure training order.

New Prisons

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing for each of the prisons referred to in his answer of 19 October, *Official Report*, column *214*, *(a)* the date on which the possibility of a new prison was announced by a Minister, *(b)* the date on which a commitment was announced by a Minister, *(c)* the date on which the general location was made public, *(d)* the dates on which planning permission was given in outline and in detail, *(e)* the date on which a contract was let, *(f)* the date on which work started on site, *(g)* the date of completion, *(h)* the date on which the prison started to accept prisoners, with estimated dates when the relevant stage has not yet been reached and *(i)* the number of prisoners for which the prison was designed.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The information requested is not readily available and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Private Pensions

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what reduction in *(a)* local government and *(b)* central Government costs would result from public sector employees being required to obtain contributory private pensions in respect of benefits above (i) twice the average weekly wage, (ii) thrice the average weekly wage and (iii) the earnings cap for tax relief operating for private sector pensions, if pension benefits were no longer paid for by the public sector above those levels.

Mr. Dorrell: If the earnings on which public service pension scheme benefits are based were limited as described, the Government Actuary's Department estimates that the annual savings to central Government would be as follows:

Limit on earnings	*£ million*
Twice the average weekly wage	175
Thrice the average weekly wage	43
Earnings cap for tax relief introduced in the Finance Act 1989	11

These estimates assume that all future accruals of pension benefit would be subject to the limitations but that benefits accrued to date would not be so affected.

Data needed to prepare corresponding estimates of the savings for local government is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

New Banks

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many applications have been made since 1 January to establish new banks.

Mr. Nelson: The Bank of England has received five such applications this year. Three related to the establishment of new entities; the other two came from overseas banks which required new authorisations for their presence in the United Kingdom: one because of a merger; the other following a group restructuring.

Banks

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on proposals to assist the creditors of *(a)* Mount bank and *(b)* Equatorial bank.

Mr. Nelson: Mount Banking Corporation and Equatorial bank are both in administration. A partial distribution has already been made to Mount's creditors and the administrators of both banks propose to make further distributions. The deposit protection fund has been activated in both cases and payments have begun to be made to depositors.

Taxation

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer of 22 April, *Official Report*, columns *172-74* to provide similar estimates of the burden of direct and indirect taxes for 1994-95 based on the assumption of statutory indexation and including measures already announced in the 1993 Budget.

Mr. Dorrell: The available information is contained in the answer which I gave to the hon. Member on 22 April 1993, *Official Report*, columns *176-78*.

Tax Changes

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) on 19 April, *Official Report*, columns *6-7*, if he will publish estimates for 1994-95 based on the assumption of statutory indexation and including measures already announced in the 1993 Budget.

Mr. Dorrell: Latest estimates of the annual change in income tax liability in 1994-95, assuming statutory indexation and inclusion of measures already announced, are in the table. The 1978-79 income tax regime has been indexed to 1994-95 levels by reference to the statutory formula and allowing for independent taxation.

For the purposes of these calculations the indexed regime of 1978-79 is applied directly to the income base of 1994-95. In practice, retention of the regime indexed as appropriate, for the intervening years would have led to changes in the income base.

Average reduction in income tax per individual[1] in 1994-95 compared with the 1978-79 indexed regime

Range of individual's income in 1994-95 (£)	*Number of individuals 1994-95[1]* (million)	*Total reduction* (£ million)	*Average reduction* (£ per annum)
Under 5,000	3·1	420	140
5,000 to 10,000	8·2	3,100	380
10,000 to 15,000	6·1	4,200	700
15,000 to 20,000	4·0	4,100	1,020
20,000 to 30,000	3·3	5,100	1,510
30,000 to 50,000	1·5	3,400	2,240
50,000 to 80,000	0·33	2,400	7,250
Over 80,000	0·19	9,000	47,300
Total	26·6	31,700	1,190

[1] Individuals liable to income tax under the 1978-79 indexed regime.

Annuality

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what work his Department has done on the cost to public funds of annuality.

Mr. Portillo: My right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer keeps this under review. We are anxious in this, as in all areas of public spending, to prevent inefficiency.

Literacy

Sir Thomas Arnold: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what response he has made to the report by Ernst and Young entitled, "Literacy, Education and Training: Their Impact on the United Kingdom Economy", a copy of which has been sent to him; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: I have read this report with interest. It would not be appropriate to comment further in advance of my right hon. and learned Friend's Budget statement.

Alcohol and Tobacco

Mr. Parry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received opposing tax increases in the Budget on beer and tobacco; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: My right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has received a number of such representations in recent weeks, all of which are considered carefully. It would not be appropriate to comment further in advance of the Budget.

Banknotes

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the status in England and Wales of banknotes in pounds sterling issued at Belfast, Edinburgh and Glasgow; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Nelson: Banknotes isued by the commercial issuing banks in Scotland and Northern Ireland may be used in transactions anywhere in the United Kingdom so long as both parties to the transaction agree that they are acceptable.

Central Statistical Office

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes there will be to the Central Statistical Office's cash or running costs limits for 1993-94.

Mr. Nelson: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the cash limit for class XVII, vote 14 will be increased by £850,000 from £42,701,000 to £43,551,000 and the running costs limit by £317,000 to £42,211,000. These increases reflect the take up of both running costs and capital end year flexibility entitlements, and a transfer from Cabinet Office: Other Services (£155,000), class XIX, vote 1. The increase will be charged to the Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Cash Limits

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes there will be to the Treasury's cash and running costs limits for 1993-94.

Mr. Nelson: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessasry supplementary estimates, two changes are proposed:

(a) the cash limit for class XVII, vote 1 1993-94 will be increased by a token £1,000 from £76,467,000 to £76,468,000. The net increase is required to meet the gross costs, estimated to be £400,000 in connection with the privatisation of Forward: Civil Service Catering. These gross costs have been offset by increased appropriations-in-aid.

(b) the cash limit for class XVII, vote 3 1993-94 will be increased by a £258,000 to £259,000 and the net running costs limit for Forward from zero to £258,000. This increase is required to meet an underpayment by Forward of PAYE contributions to the Inland Revenue in respect of prior year payments to casual employees.

This increase will be fully offset by a reduction in the Bank of England's non-voted cash limit to £87·996 million and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

EC Public Procurement Directive

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to discuss with the European Commission and member states the level of implementation of EC public procurement directive (90/521/EEC) by other member states; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Portillo: I refer the hon. and learned Member to the replies which my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade gave to the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Cash) on 21 October, *Official Report,* cols. *301-2.*

Departmental Offices

Mr. Byers: To ask the the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many civil servants are working in his Department's offices in Parliament street.

Sir John Cope: On 1 October there were 1,076.

Fruit Juice Industry

Dr. Howells: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment his Department made of the likely financial impact of the Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993 on the freshly squeezed fruit juice industry before the order was laid before the House; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what consultations took place between his Department and the freshly squeezed fruit juice industry before his Department laid the Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993 before the House; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: Tax changes of this nature are not normally discussed in advance. The order followed careful consideration of the relevant factors and is designed to clarify an area of the law where there is now no coherent borderline between directly competing products following conflicting VAT tribunal decisions. It will put all fruit juices, however produced, on the same tax footing so that the VAT system does not favour one competing product over another.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

London Orchestras

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage (1) what representations he has received about the Arts Council's decision to reduce its funding to the London orchestras; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will make a statement on the method which the Arts Council has proposed for deciding on the level of its future funding of London orchestras.

Mr. Brooke: I have received approximately 20 letters on the Arts Council's decision to adopt a different approach to its funding of the London orchestras.

The Arts Council has asked its clients to plan for a 2 per cent. grant reduction in 1994-95 and for standstill grants in the subsequent two years. The Council did, however, write to all its clients at the beginning of this financial year to say that it could no longer give revenue-funded organisations 12 months' notice of any intention to cease or substantially reduce its funding. The letter also stated that the Arts Council was undertaking a review of its activities.

London Orchestras

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list the members of the Arts Council's music panel and their relevant qualifications to judge the future funding of the London orchestras.

Mr. Brooke: The music advisory panel is constituted to be able to consider authoritatively the wide range of music supported by the Arts Council. Each year the council writes to a wide range of professional bodies, including the Association of British Orchestras, seeking nominations for the music advisory panel. Its current members are as follows:

Bryan Magee (chairman):
a member of the Arts Council appointed by myself;
Professor Margaret Bent:
early music specialist, All Souls', Oxford;
Richard Bernas:
conductor;
Dr. Graham Dixon:
producer, Music Department, BBC Radio 3;
Evelyn Glennie:
percussionist;
Dr. Jonty Harrison:
composer, lecturer at University of Birmingham;
Dr. Jane Manning:
soprano, Director of Jane's Minstrels;
Priti Paintal:
composer;
Dr. Jane Ritterman:
Director, Royal College of Music;
Janis Susskind:
Head of Promotions at the music publishers, Boosey and Hawkes;
Gail Thompson:
jazz musician

As its name implies, the panel's role is advisory. Decisions about the future funding of the London orchestras rest with the Arts Council alone.

It is for the Arts Council to formulate its artistic policies and to determine the means by which its decisions are implemented. I am assured that the council has given the most careful consideration to its approach to the funding of the London orchestras.

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what has been the level of grant from the Arts Council to the four London orchestras in each of the past five years; and what are the projected figures for the next three years.

Mr. Brooke: The information requested is as follows:

	1989-90 £	*1990-91* £	*1991-92* £	*1992-93* £	*1993-94* £
LPO	450,000	465,000	461,920	1,062,000	1,128,500
LSO	600,150	600,000	1,048,000	1,110,880	1,128,500
Philharmonia	450,000	540,000	568,940	700,000	711,500
RPO	435,050	450,000	459,140	400,000	400,000

Millennium Fund

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will state the dates being treated for the purposes of the Millennium Fund as the end of the 20th century and the commencement of the 21st century.

Mr. Brooke: The 20th century will come to an end on 31 December 2000, and the 21st century and third millennium will begin on 1 January 2001. However, we recognise that many people will wish particularly to mark the beginning of the year 2000, and for that reason the Millennium Commission's terms of reference, as laid down in the National Lottery Act 1993, are to support projects which mark the year 2000 and the beginning of the third millennium.

Transvestite Television

Lady Olga Maitland: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what steps he is taking to ban the transvestite television channel.

Mr. Brooke: I am aware of reports of a new satellite television channel catering for transvestites. There is little evidence to indicate when broadcasts will commence, or whether they will do so at all.

It is the duty of the Independent Television Commission to bring to my attention any foreign satellite television service it considers goes beyond the limits of what is acceptable. My actions against the pornographic television channel "Red Hot Television" earlier this year should be sufficient warning to anyone who considers overstepping those limits.

National Lottery

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage when he will issue guidelines for the distribution and potential recipients of the national lottery revenue assigned to sport; and if they will be published.

Mr. Sproat: It is for the distributing bodies to issue guidelines to applicants for lottery money. These will need to be consistent with the directions which my right hon. Friend will issue under section 26 of the National Lottery

etc Act. In the case of sport, I expect that the sports councils will publish their guidelines for applicants next summer.

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage whether Oflot will operate an inspectorate across the United Kingdom.

Mr. Sproat: The operation of Oflot will be a matter for the Director General. The Director General will have powers to regulate the operation of the national lottery throughout the United Kingdom.

Departmental Offices

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage how many civil servants are working in his Department's offices at 2-4 Cockspur street.

Mr. Brooke: The figure is 283.

Office Costs

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what is the estimated amount to be spent in 1993-94 on rent and other costs associated with the offices of his Department in 2-4 Cockspur street, London.

Mr. Brooke *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* The rents paid for Government offices are a commercial-in-confidence matter between the Government and their landlords. The Department will pay £255,000 to Property Holdings in respect of services charges for Cockspur street and £797,000 in contributions in lieu of rates in 1993-94.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Hospitality

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, pursuant to his answer of 20 October, column 236, if he will specify the amount spent by his Department on official hospitality in respect of the Prime Minister's office.

Mr. Waldegrave: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council on 25 October, *Official Report,* col. *426.*

Cash Limits

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what proposals there are to change the 1993-94 cash limit or running costs limit for the Office of Public Service and Science.

Mr. Waldegrave: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate the cash limit for the Office of Public Service and Science (class XVIII, vote 1) will be increased by £50,000 from £73,458,000 to £73,508,000 and the gross running cost limit will also be increased by £50,000 from £90,518,000 to £90,568,000. This takes account of a transfer from the Department of Trade and Industry (class IV, vote 1) of £50,000 in respect of the running costs of the Link Secretariat which is being transferred from the Department of Trade and Industry to the Office of Public Service and Science.

The net running cost limit for the Civil Service college has been decreased by £758,000 from £1,800,0000 to £1,042,000 reflecting greater than anticipated receipts from the provision of training courses.

The changes will not add to the planned total of public expenditure.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

PHARE Programme

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on United Kingdom involvement in the EC's PHARE programme.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The EC's PHARE programme finances, mainly, the provision of know-how to Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The European Commission expect to spend around 450 mecu —approximately £345 million—in 1993. The United Kingdom contributes over 16 per cent. of these funds.

We discuss policy and management issues on a regular basis both with the Commission and other member states. My right hon. Friend the Minister for Overseas Development has met Sir Leon Brittan on several occasions to consider these issues.

British companies play an active part in the programme by providing know-how and services. They are well regarded by both recipients and the Commission. Companies and other entities from the United Kingdom bid successfully for about 20 per cent. of the value of contracts awarded under the programme.

Kenya

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the current aid projects that have been approved for Kenya for 1993-94.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The following table lists the capital and technical co-operation projects approved since June this year. These are additional to the projects listed in the table provided in response to the hon. Member's question on 14 June, cols *413-14.*

Project	*Total Cost of Project £000*
Roads	
Bailey Bridging	170
Small Scale Enterprise	
Business Growth Training	320
Small Enterprise Awards Scheme	514
Education	
Polytechnics Information Technology	370
Health and Population	
Provision of Contraceptives	950

Peru

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what development aid has been given to Peru by Her Majesty's Government in each of the past five years; and for what purposes it was dedicated.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The latest available figures for gross bilateral aid in each of the past five years are: 1988-89 £1·1 million, 1989-90 £0·9 million, 1990-91 £1·6 million, 1991-92 £1·4 million, 1992-93 £2 million (provisional).

This aid has mainly focused on technical co-operation, and specific humanitarian aid—disaster relief. Recent activities have included technical training in the United Kingdom, projects in support of veterinary services to livestock farmers, English language materials and teacher training in secondary schools, and the commissioning of small hydro-electric power plants; and jointly funded projects with British non-governmental organisations in agriculture, community development and health care. Other activities now completed include development of fish products, water leakage control techniques and quality surveillance and cotton pest control.

Commonwealth Institute

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his Department's decision to withdraw funding from the Commonwealth Institute.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: My right hon. Friend, the Foreign Secretary's decision was taken in the light of the pressing need to finance other forms of aid which are of higher priority. We very much hope that the Commonwealth Institute will use the period until March 1996, when grant support will cease, to reconstitute itself as a fully independent body, thus enabling it to continue some, if not all, of its existing activities. We shall do all we can to assist the board and the Director General to secure a sound future.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Departmental Advice

Sir Thomas Arnold: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice is currently offered by his Department to persons proposing to visit *(a)* Egypt, *(b)* Tanzania and *(c)* Uganda.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The current Foreign and Commonwealth consular travel advice for Egypt is:

"Since the summer of 1992 there have been a number of violent incidents in Cairo and Upper Egypt, aimed at embarrassing the Government, including attacks on tourist targets by Islamic groups in which three foreigners, one a Briton, have been killed and several others injured. In early June, five Britons on a tourist bus in Cairo were injured in a bomb explosion. In August a River Nile cruise boat, carrying British tourists, was fired on between Assiut and Dairut, and in mid-September another, carrying French tourists, was fired upon in the Assiut area. In late October, three foreigners were killed when a gunman opened fire in a Cairo hotel. Islamic groups have threatened more violence in Cairo and further incidents there and elsewhere in Egypt must be expected.

The Egyptian authorities are giving the highest priority to protecting visitors, and the great majority experience no security difficulty, but complete security cannot be guaranteed. Visitors should be vigilant at all times, avoid the areas of Dairut and Assiut unless they have essential business there, and are reminded to behave and dress discreetly."

For Uganda the travel advice is:

"There has been an increase in incidents of armed robbery in Uganda, including Kampala. If possible, do not drive at night, and, in particular:

(i) Avoid the border areas with Rwanda, Zaire and Sudan
(ii) Exercise extra caution in Northern Urganda (Karamoja, Teso, Lango, Acholi, Madi and West Nile), and
(iii) Avoid travel in Murchison Falls National Park north of the River Nile.

Before travelling up-country, inform the British High Commission in Kampala (Telephone: 257054/9). Please report to them any known incidents involving British travellers."

We do not issued a travel advice notice for Tanzania.

Prisoners (British Nationals)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the known number of British nationals at present serving prison sentences in prisons overseas; and if he will list the countries and the number of United Kingdom citizens detained in each country.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I have arranged for the hon. Member to receive a written reply from the Consular Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as soon as possible, with the information that it has to hand.

BBC Overseas Service

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Government's policy towards the funding of the BBC overseas service.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The BBC World Service is funded on a triennial basis by grants-in-aid administered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. There are no plans for any change to this arrangement.

Grants-in-aid in the current trienium—1991-92 to 1993-94—have risen from £159·58 million to £175·86 million this year. Funding for the 1994-95 to 1996-97 triennium is subject to the outcome of this year's public expenditure survey.

Thailand

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Thai Government regarding child prostitution in Thailand; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Goodlad: We regularly raise our concerns about child prostitution with the Thai authorities. We are glad to note that the Thai Government have committed themselves to combatting child prostitution, and are enacting legislation to punish the customers, procurers and owners of brothels.

UNESCO

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has for the United Kingdom to rejoin UNESCO; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We continue to keep membership of UNESCO under close review, but have not yet taken any decision about rejoining the organisation.

British Youth Council

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of his Department's total spending is taken up with expenditure on the British Youth Council.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Total FCO expenditure in 1992-93 —Diplomatic Wing plus ODA—was £3,302,729,000, of which BYC funding amounted to £42,000.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what was the level of grant-in-aid funded to the British Youth Council in real terms, for each year since 1987-88; and what plans he has for the future funding of the British Youth Council.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: FCO funding in real terms, at 1987 prices has been:

	£
1987-88	42,964
1988-89	41,014
1989-90	38,484
1990-91	34,011
1991-92	31,886
1992-93	30,517
1993-94	29,984

The FCO has notified the British Youth Council that its funding will be terminated from April 1994. However, the possibility of a limited amount of transitional funding for financial year 1994-95 only is currently under discussion.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the percentage change in the level of grant, in cash terms and in real terms, funded by his Department to the British Youth Council for each year from 1987-88 to 1994-95.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Percentage changes:

In cash terms:

	Per cent.
1988-89	+2·4
1989-90	0·0
1990-91	–4·5
1991-92	0·0
1992-93	0·0
1993-94	0·0

In real terms:

	Per cent.
1988-89	–4·5
1989-90	–6·2
1990-91	–11·6
1991-92	–6·3
1992-93	–4·3
1993-94	–1·7

The possibility of limited funding for 1994-95 only will be discussed with the British Youth Council on 2 November.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what has been the level of grant-in-aid to the British Youth Council in each year since 1979; what plans he has for funding after the current financial year; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The information prior to 1986-87 could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Grant-in-aid levels post-1985-86 are:

	£
1986-87	43,876
1987-88	42,964
1988-89	44,000
1989-90	44,000
1990-91	42,000
1991-92	42,000
1992-93	42,000

The British Youth Council's FCO grant will be terminated from April 1994. However, the possibility of a limited amount of transitional funding for financial year 1994-95 only is currently under discussion.

Russia

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the assistance to be given to the Russian Federation in the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We shall be sending a small team to observe the elections; we hope to include eight parliamentarians, whom the British group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union have agreed to select on behalf of the Government. I very much hope that hon. Members will actively consider volunteering to participate. We have also offered assistance and advice directly linked to the election preparations and are discussing requirements with the Russian Government. To underline our long-term support for democratic reform in Russia, we have established a British programme for democracy, worth £500,000, to provide training for the new institutions in place after the elections.

Departmental Offices

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many civil servants are working in his Department's offices at King Charles street.

Mr. Goodlad: A total of 871.

Cash Limits

Sir Nicholas Fairbairn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what changes he proposes to make in his Department's diplomatic wing cash limits and running cost limits for 1993-94.

Mr. Goodlad: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate the following changes will be made.

The cash limit for class II, vote 1, (Overseas Representation) will be reduced by £10,319,000 from £828,928,000 to £818,609,000.

The gross running costs limit on class II, vote 1 will be reduced by £5,537,000 from £585,414,000 to £579,877,000 following a transfer of provision to class II, vote 2 (non-running costs).

The cash limit for class II, vote 2 (Other External Relations) will be increased by £98,121,000 from £203,109,000 to £301,230,000. The increase will be met by savings of £10·3 million on vote 1, by savings of £2 million on vote 2 and by increased appropriations in aid on vote 2 of £1·7 million and the balance will be charged to the Reserve.

The cash limit for class II, vote 3 (External Broadcasting and Monitoring) will be increased by £2,597,000 in respect of the take up of end year flexibility entitlement announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993, c. *512-17*.

None of the proposed changes will add to the planned total of public expenditure.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Sheep Dips

Ms Corston: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food on what date the operative research protection group in her Department first received indications or evidence about adverse reaction following exposure by humans to organo-phosphate sheep dips.

Mr. Soames: The operator protection group forms part of the pesticides and contaminants group of the Central Science Laboratory. It deals with potential hazards to operators arising from the use of pesticides. Sheep dips are classified as veterinary medicines and do not fall directly within the group's remit. Information on suspected adverse reactions to organophosphorus sheep dips is collected by the veterinary medicines directorate. The first suspected adverse reaction report recorded on the data base involving human exposure to an OP sheep dip was received by the VMD in July 1985.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what date she now expects for the introduction of the fourth round of environmentally sensitive areas in *(a)* Blackdown hills, *(b)* Cotswold hills, *(c)* Dartmoor, *(d)* Essex coast, *(e)* Shropshire hills and *(f)* Upper Thames tributaries.

Mr. Jack: We still plan to introduce these new environmentally sensitive areas next year.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how procedures for isolating, monitoring and reporting BSE livestock suspects born after 18 July 1988 differ from those born prior to that date; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Soames: Suspect cases of BSE reported in cattle born after 18 July 1988, when the ban on the use of ruminant protein in ruminant feed was introduced, as with all suspect BSE cases, are compulsorily slaughtered only when a confident clinical diagnosis of the presence of the disease can be made. Slaughter may be carried out sooner if necessary to prevent suffering: this affects compensation arrangements but not the way in which the case is handled and laboratory diagnosis carried out.

Particular care is taken in the clinical assessment of BSE suspects born after the feed ban because it was found, at an early stage, that more than 90 per cent. of such cases were negative on laboratory examination, compared with a negative rate of 15 per cent. for all cattle. In February 1992, Ministry field staff were therefore instructed that suspects born after the ban should not normally be slaughtered at the first visit, but that a further visit should be made, at least seven days later, to reassess the progress of the case. An earlier revisit was to be made if the owner reported that the animal had deteriorated, and immediate action was to be taken to protect the welfare of the suspect animal. This observation period allowed many of the suspects to return to normal, or an alternative diagnosis to be made and treatment given by the owner's veterinary surgeon. This change has resulted in an improvement in the negative rate in this group of animals from 90 per cent. in 1991 to 28 per cent. in 1993.

Animals which are suspected to have BSE do not have to be isolated except when calving.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what information is available from the outcome of tests on mink to establish the potential for transferring BSE to this species.

Mr. Soames: Although mink have been shown to be susceptible to BSE in experimental studies using brain material from confirmed BSE cases, this does not relate to risk of transmission of the disease in the natural situation.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food why specified offals excluded from the food chain in November 1989 did not include bone marrow, liver and kidney.

Mr. Soames: The specified bovine offals ban was introduced to remove from the food chain those tissues which, by analogy with natural scrapie in Suffolk sheep were most likely to contain the infective agent of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in significant quantities.

Bone marrow, liver and kidney were excluded as they show minimal or no detectable scrapie infectivity. Subsequent studies in mice with tissue from BSE-infected cattle have shown that only the brain and cervical spinal cord have any detectable infectivity. The BSE agent has not been detected in bone marrow, liver and kidney from cattle which were clinically affected with BSE.

The specified bovine offals ban has been endorsed by indpendent experts in this country, and by the scientific veterinary committee of the European Commission, the World Health Organisation and the Office International des Epizooties.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) how many confirmed cases of BSE were reported between 1 January 1992 and 30 September 1992 from each county in England;

(2) how many confirmed cases of BSE were reported between 1 January 1992 and 30 September 1992 from each county in Scotland;

(3) how many confirmed cases of BSE were reported between 1 January 1992 and 30 September 1992 from each county in Wales.

Mr. Soames: The number of confirmed cases in Great Britain by county by date of notification of suspicion of bovine spongiform encephalopathy to the Ministry for the period requested is as follows:

Number of confirmed cases
1 January 1992 to 30 September 1992

Region and county	*Number*
Eastern	
Bedfordshire	77
Cambridgeshire	74
Essex	116
Hertfordshire	80
Lincolnshire	151
Norfolk	641
Northamptonshire	199
Suffolk	289
Midlands and Western	
Cheshire	1,240
Derbyshire	687
Hereford and Worcestershire	442
Lancashire	958
Leicestershire	470

Region and county	Number
Manchester	43
Merseyside	23
Nottinghamshire	156
Shropshire	678
Staffordshire	747
West Midlands	24
Warwickshire	227
Northern	
Cleveland	29
Cumbria	866
Durham	128
Humberside	99
Northumberland	181
Tyne and Wear	7
Yorkshire North	1,109
Yorkshire South	85
Yorkshire West	142
Scotland	
Borders	73
Central	27
Dumfries	379
Fife	38
Grampian	206
Highland	39
Lothian	31
Orkney	16
Shetland	1
Strathclyde	311
Tayside	82
South Eastern	
Berkshire	146
Buckinghamshire	204
Hampshire	566
Isle of Wight	127
Kent	304
London	18
Oxfordshire	355
Surrey	212
Sussex East	293
Sussex West	512
South Western	
Avon	498
Cornwall	1,832
Devon	2,467
Dorset	1,480
Gloucestershire	519
Somerset	2,076
Wiltshire	1,127
Wales	
Clwyd	401
Dyfed	1,477
Glamorgan Mid	29
Glamorgan South	84
Glamorgan West	25
Gwent	183
Gwynedd	113
Powys	356

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many cases of confirmed BSE have been reported from *(a)* the Isle of Man, *(b)* Jersey and *(c)* Guernsey, annually for each year since 1988.

Mr. Soames: The information requested, kindly provided by the island authorities, is as follows:

	Isle of Man	Jersey[1]	Guernsey[2]
1988	6	1	34
1989	6	4	49
1990	22	8	73
1991	68	15	75
1992	108	23	92
1993[3]	73	19	94

[1] For Jersey, the information is shown by the year in which the animals were slaughtered as it is not available by the date when they were reported.

[2] For Guernsey, only early cases and cases born after the ruminant feed ban in July 1988 have been confirmed by histopathological examination of brain material. All other confirmed cases are based solely on diagnosis by clinical signs.

[3] To 26 October 1993.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will make a statement on the accuracy of current methods to identify tissues infected with BSE outside the brain and spinal cord.

Mr. Soames: The bioassay used to detect infectivity in cattle tissues is the most sensitive method currently available. That the test is effective is shown by the fact that it does detect infectivity in brain tissue and cervical spinal cord from confirmed BSE cases, and that incubation periods were shorter than for the equivalent transmission experiments in cattle.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food when she will publish the results of the monitoring study described in paragraph 8.1 of the Southwood report.

Mr. Soames: The monitoring study described in paragraph 8.1 of the Southwood report has not produced any results yet as it is being conducted as a blind experiment and has a number of years to run. However, field evidence derived from the BSE epidemic as a whole shows that to 4 October 1993 there are 347 confirmed BSE cases in animals which were offspring of previously confirmed cases. This incidence is not statistically different from the incidence in cattle whose dams are unaffected.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what modifications to the announced programme for new environmentally sensitive areas, and to the expansion in resources for ESAs generally, she now proposes.

Mr. Jack: Six of the new English environmentally sensitive areas were launched earlier this year and we plan to launch the remaining six next year when full details of each individual scheme will be published. An announcement on the planned expansion of resources for all our agri-environment schemes, including ESAs, will be made in the context of the Chancellor's unified Budget statement.

Dairy Cattle

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the total number of dairy cattle in England, for each year from 1984 to 1993 for each county.

Mr. Jack: The information requested for the years 1984 to 1992 is shown in the following table. Figures for 1993 are not yet available.

Total number of dairy cattle by county 1984-1992

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
North Region									
Cleveland	4,940	4,810	4,908	4,705	4,667	4,557	4,388	4,083	3,990
Cumbria	159,750	155,279	156,453	152,833	148,001	146,024	145,258	143,688	138,698
Durham	21,942	20,184	20,193	18,686	17,920	17,537	17,411	16,783	16,616
Northumberland	15,482	14,575	14,622	13,525	13,244	12,977	12,978	12,430	11,583
Tyne and Wear	2,668	2,608	2,560	2,363	2,330	2,198	2,197	2,024	1,777
	204,782	197,456	198,736	192,112	186,162	183,293	182,232	179,008	172,664
Yorkshire and Humberside									
Humberside	15,639	14,184	13,774	13,132	11,938	11,425	11,394	10,856	10,105
North Yorkshire	125,515	120,353	120,959	115,457	111,064	108,499	108,774	107,459	104,174
South Yorkshire	14,816	14,000	14,274	13,527	12,961	12,895	12,811	12,169	11,726
West Yorkshire	33,237	31,035	30,490	29,468	28,280	27,273	27,522	26,758	25,655
	189,207	179,572	179,497	171,584	164,243	160,092	160,501	157,242	151,660
East Midlands Region									
Derbyshire	75,723	72,670	71,808	68,813	66,575	66,189	66,524	63,302	62,140
Leicestershire	47,966	45,509	45,041	43,249	41,488	40,785	40,711	39,349	38,058
Lincolnshire	21,776	19,670	18,960	18,047	17,069	16,583	16,951	16,628	15,375
Northamptonshire	19,170	17,969	17,598	16,709	15,943	15,853	15,669	14,970	14,303
Nottinghamshire	19,822	18,837	18,336	17,889	16,934	17,263	16,983	16,380	15,353
	184,457	174,655	171,743	164,707	158,009	156,673	156,838	150,629	145,229
East Anglia Region									
Cambridgeshire	4,964	4,454	4,229	4,067	3,780	3,382	3,373	3,516	3,073
Norfolk	29,597	27,437	27,253	25,849	23,830	22,777	23,358	21,832	20,678
Suffolk	20,535	18,269	17,751	16,713	14,971	14,384	14,654	13,463	12,729
	55,096	50,160	49,233	46,629	42,581	40,543	41,385	38,811	36,480
South East Region									
Bedfordshire	5,476	5,337	5,125	5,128	4,800	4,719	4,654	4,687	4,604
Berkshire	14,502	13,326	12,573	12,466	11,482	10,784	10,954	9,911	8,865
Buckinghamshire	24,166	22,721	22,857	21,504	20,798	19,869	18,817	17,852	17,139
East Sussex	28,480	26,137	26,619	24,491	23,293	22,235	20,675	19,812	18,431
Essex	16,107	14,790	14,288	14,219	13,582	12,995	12,422	11,732	10,564
Greater London	2,633	2,519	2,478	2,512	2,386	2,104	2,266	2,129	2,040
Hampshire	49,398	47,421	45,776	44,350	41,406	40,790	40,087	38,432	36,407
Hertfordshire	11,416	10,259	10,389	9,936	9,535	9,404	8,489	7,442	6,953
Isle of Wight	10,164	9,260	8,821	8,558	7,574	7,671	7,311	6,774	6,454
Kent	25,627	24,663	23,473	21,585	19,850	19,077	18,435	17,110	16,286
Oxfordshire	33,408	31,503	31,534	30,277	28,810	28,071	27,965	26,127	25,561
Surrey	20,551	19,011	18,565	17,288	16,734	16,423	15,523	13,703	12,258
West Sussex	34,498	33,980	33,490	31,449	29,772	26,703	26,504	25,066	24,015
	276,426	260,927	255,988	243,763	230,022	220,845	214,102	200,777	189,577
South West Region									
Avon	48,121	46,876	47,083	44,489	43,268	42,451	41,581	40,069	36,805
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	116,548	111,818	113,270	110,433	105,084	103,439	103,115	100,630	98,801
Devon	208,527	199,781	199,374	197,738	190,435	188,121	185,808	181,522	176,537
Dorset	115,926	112,405	111,890	108,822	104,247	102,589	102,602	98,177	95,544
Gloucestershire	58,365	56,139	55,832	54,990	51,898	50,521	49,481	47,840	46,293
Somerset	159,175	152,810	151,479	146,358	141,797	140,890	140,541	136,475	132,465
Wiltshire	93,706	90,131	90,764	86,444	82,038	81,323	81,523	77,681	74,354
	800,368	769,960	769,692	749,274	718,767	709,334	704,651	682,394	660,799
West Midlands Region									
Hereford and Worcester	62,802	59,619	59,253	57,2?4	54,842	52,405	52,352	50,107	48,796
Shropshire	109,357	105,803	105,346	102,8?2	99,447	99,100	98,399	95,995	93,219
Staffordshire	113,838	109,414	110,613	105,861	102,318	101,901	102,316	100,253	99,607
Warwickshire	30,898	29,745	29,479	27,711	258,811	25,993	25,911	24,982	23,517
West Midlands	4,582	4,326	4,210	4,029	3,790	3,762	3,644	3,419	3,221
	321,477	308,907	308,901	297,697	286,208	283,161	282,622	274,756	268,360
North West Region									
Cheshire	152,268	145,976	146,958	144,893	138,046	138,673	138,818	137,139	134,428
Greater Manchester	15,956	14,887	14,891	13,904	13,185	13,009	12,703	12,674	11,759
Lancashire	114,443	110,297	109,796	106,401	102,237	99,749	100,688	99,889	97,429
Merseyside	3,369	3,276	3,311	3,086	3,070	2,830	3,100	2,997	2,955
	286,036	274,436	274,956	268,284	256,538	254,261	255,309	252,699	246,571

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
England Total	2,317,849	2,216,073	2,208,746	2,134,050	2,042,530	2,008,202	1,997,640	1,936,316	1,871,340

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food June Agricultural and Horticultural Census.
Note: The data in this table relate to main holdings only i.e. excludes data on minor holdings.

Cash Limits

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what changes are proposed in her Department's cash limits for 1993-94.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: The cash limit for class III, vote 5 (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food: Departmental Research, Advisory Services and Administration) will be decreased by £341,000 from £312,934,000 to £312,593,000. This change is the result of transfers of £288,000 to the Intervention Board—Executive Agency (class III, vote 2) and £53,000 to the Welsh Office (class XV, vote 9) and will reduce the department's gross running cost limit from £309,410,000 to £309,069,000.

Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the cash limit for the Intervention Board Executive Agency (class III, vote 2) will be increased by £932,000 to £52,932,000. The transfer from class III, vote 5 contributes towards a proposed increase in provision for the agency's administration vote (class III, vote 2) following the announcement—*Official Report,* 24 June 1993, columns 244-45—that it shall assume operational responsibility for the administration of milk quotas in the United Kingdom. Capital will be increased by £295,000 to £1,456,000 and agents' fees will be reduced by £1,000,000 to £19,831,000. The supplementary estimate will also give effect to the running costs end-year flexibility entitlement announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993, *Official Report,* columns 512-17.

The running costs limit for the Intervention Board executive agency will be increased by £1,637,000 to £32,372,000 to reflect the necessary preparations for the administration of milk quotas (£1,552,000) and additional costs of computer conversion (£85,000). These increases will be met in part by the transfer from class III, vote 5 (£288,000) and end-year flexibility provision of £144,000.

The transfer of funds from MAFF to the Welsh Office takes account of that department assuming responsibility for the administration of grants and subsidy payments in Wales. It is included in a number of changes to class XV, vote 9 (Welsh Office Administration) which contribute to a net reduction in the cash limit for that vote as detailed in the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales.

The cash limit for class III, vote 4 (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food: Agricultural, Food and Fishing Services) will be reduced by £19,171,000 from £385,985,000 to £366,814,000. Within this limit, expenditure will be reduced by £15,423,000 on agricultural schemes, by £3,295,000 on coast protection and by £453,000 on sea fishery support. These reductions reflect a predicted decrease in demand and delay in implementation in further areas of these schemes. The remaining reduction (£82,000) reflects the transfer of responsibility for the Oslo Commission to DOE.

The increases will be offset by savings and charges to the Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Brucellosis

Dr. Strang: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer of 25 October, *Official Report,* column *512,* how many cattle affected with brucellosis were imported; from which countries and on which date; and if she will make a statement.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: Two cattle in Anglesey and two in Cheshire which reacted positively to serological tests for brucellosis are known to have been imported. One of these came from the Netherlands in August and three came from France: one in May, one in June and one in July. Brucella abortus has been cultured from post mortem samples only from one French animal imported in June and found on the farm in Anglesey. Detailed epidemiological investigations to determine the source and origin of infection are continuing, and it cannot be assumed that any of these cattle were infected before they were imported.

Fish Conservation

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what steps she is taking to protect the interests of United Kingdom fishermen in exploring options for the conservation of fish stocks in the Irish Box-ICES areas VIIa, VIIb, VIIf, VIIg, VIIj and part VIa-in the current discussions on the implementation on the EC treaty of accession for Spain and Portugal.

Mr. Jack: At the June Fisheries Council, when Iberian arrangements were discussed, it was agreed that relative stability should be respected and that there must be no increase in effort. The Commission proposals presented at the October Council asked the Council to agree major changes to the present Iberian access and effort arrangements but discussion of what is to replace them and meet the conditions agreed at the June Council by way of controls, exemptions and obligations would only take place at some point in the next two years.

I said that this was asking the Council to sign up to the equivalent of a blank cheque. The new arrangements must in practice confine Spanish and Portuguese fishing activities as closely as possible to their current pattern and not enable expansion or diversion of effort beyond that. We wanted the Council to agree continuation of the present restrictions on access to the Irish box and the North sea. Also, all the arrangements must be dealt with simultaneously. This would be fairer to all concerned. It could be done before the end of the year or the whole issue could be rolled forward. At whatever point we settle this issue the United Kingdom aim will be to secure considerable improvements to what is now on the table.

Food From Britain

Dr. Strang: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the principal functions of the agricultural development division of Food From Britain and give figures of the funding and staffing levels used by each function.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: The table shows information based on Food From Britain's 1993-94 budget. Outturn figures will be lower because of savings resulting from the closure of the division, but final details are not yet available.

Function	*Funding*[1] *(£'000)*	*Staffing*[2] *(man years)*
Administration of co-operation grants (remaining work)	120	2·5
Advice on applications for group marketing grant	210	4·5
Business development advice	320	7

[1] Staff costs including travel and subsistence and overheads.
[2] Includes part-time staff.

Civil Servants

Mr. Byers: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many civil servants are working in his Ministry's offices at Whitehall place.

Mr. Jack: There are at present 657 officials working in Whitehall place and 111 in the adjacent office at 55 Whitehall. These numbers include 20 casual staff.

Agriculture Development Division

Dr. Strang: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) where the principal functions of the agriculture development division of Food From Britain will be allocated in the future;

(2) what funding and staffing will be made available to a successor to the agricultural development division; and in which areas and for what projects those funds will be directed.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: The division is being closed down as a result of the refocusing of FFB on exports following the Stevenson report. The functions it formerly carried out will be discontinued, apart from remaining work on the administration of co-operation grants which will transfer to Agriculture Departments. I am, however, continuing to work closely with the agriculture and food industries to address the needs for improvement of marketing on the domestic market.

Waste Dumping at Sea

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) if she will make it her policy to support amendments to the London convention to permanently ban the dumping of radioactive waste at sea at the meeting of contracting parties being held in London on 8 to 12 November.

(2) if she will make it her policy to support amendments to the London convention to permanently ban the dumping of industrial waste at sea;

(3) if she will make it her policy to support amendments to the London convention to permanently ban ocean incineration of waste.

Mr. Jack: At the forthcoming consultative meeting of the London convention we will seek to facilitate the use of the best practical environmental option for the disposal of all types of wastes.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Agricultural Development Operational Programme

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people made applications in respect of the agricultural development operational programme scheme from 1 April 1988 to 31 March 1993; and, of these, how many were approved and how many were refused.

Mr. Ancram: The number of applications received under the agricultural development operational programme to 31 March 1993 was 12,070, of which 160 have been refused and 11,511 have been approved to date.

Internment

Lady Olga Maitland: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consideration he has given to re-introducing internment in Northern Ireland.

Sir John Wheeler: The power of executive detention remains on the statute book. However, it would be brought into force only in particular circumstances and it is not the policy of the Government to discuss what those circumstances might be.

Maternity Services

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the members' names of the departmental review committee reviewing maternity services in Northern Ireland; when it was set up; how often it has met; when it will report; and what opportunity has been given for submissions to the departmental review committee.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* The Department of Health and Social Services announced the establishment of the maternity unit study group on 28 October 1993. The group will meet for the first time on 25 November and is expected to report by the end of March 1994. The group will consider what evidence and submissions it should invite from interested organisations and individuals in due course. The members of the group are:

Mrs. Brenda McLaughlin, Chairman
Mr. Derek Baker
Dr. Henrietta Campbell
Mrs. Fionnuala Cook
Miss Eileen MacBrinn
Dr. Denis Martin
Miss Maeve McConville
Dr. Agnes McKnight
Mr. Douglas Smyth
Mrs. Gladys Smyth
Miss Mary Uprichard

Severely Disadvantaged Areas

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many farmers in the United Kingdom were in receipt of hill livestock compensatory allowances in the severely disadvantaged areas according to the most recent figures for each year since 1978.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* The number of farmers in severely disadvantaged areas of Northern Ireland who were paid hill livestock compensatory allowances is as follows:

Year	*Number of farmers*
1978	12,882
1979	12,596
1980	12,410
1981	12,090
1982	11,977
1983	11,959
1984	11,861
1985	12,255
1986	12,268
1987	12,160
1988	12,100
1989	12,205
1990	12,309
1991	12,333
1992	12,326
1993	[1]12,200

[1] Provisional.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what was the net farm income for mainly sheep and sheep and cattle farms in severely disadvantaged areas, in both nominal and real terms for each year since 1978.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* Information for mainly sheep farms is not available. Estimated income figures for cattle and sheep farms in the severely disadvantaged areas are given in the tables. The basis of farm typology was changed in 1992-93 and the data are therefore, presented in two tables, one covering the period 1978-79 to 1991-92 (old classification) and the other the period 1986-87 to 1992-93 (new classification).

Average net farm income on cattle and sheep farms in the Severely Disadavantaged Area in Northern Ireland (old classification)[1]

	£'000 per farm		*Indices[2]*	
	Current prices	*1991-92 prices[3]*	*Current prices*	*Real terms[3]*
1978-79[4]	4·6	12·2	152	374
1979-80[4]	1·1	2·5	35	75
1980-81[4]	1·6	3·2	30	55
1981-82[4]	5·3	9·4	108	178
1982-83[4]	4·9	8·0	96	147
1983-84	4·4	6·9	104	153
1984-85	5·9	8·8	127	177
1985-86	2·3	3·2	52	69
1986-87	2·1	2·9	58	74
1987-88	8·1	10·6	190	232
1988-89	6·2	7·7	159	186
1989-90	3·9	4·5	96	104
1990-91	4·2	4·4	98	97
1991-92	4·4	4·4	106	99

Average net farm income on cattle and sheep farms in the Severely Disadavantaged Area in Northern Ireland (new classification)[1]

	£'000 per farm		*Indices[2]*	
	Current prices	*1991-92 prices[3]*	*Current prices*	*Real prices[3]*
1986-87	3·7	5·1	74	94
1987-88	8·9	11·7	160	195
1988-89	7·3	9·1	143	167
1989-90	5·0	5·8	96	104
1990-91	4·7	4·9	88	87
1991-92	4·6	4·6	117	110
1992-93[5]	6·4	6·2	164	149

[1] Accounting years ending on average in February.
[2] 1989-90—1991-92 = 100.
[3] This information has been derived by deflating the current price estimates by the Retail Price Index.
[4] The estimates for these years are not strictly comparable with those for later years.
[5] Provisional.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many producers in the United Kingdom are entitled to hill livestock compensatory allowances; and what proportion of those are located in *(a)* severely disadvantaged areas and *(b)* disadvantaged areas.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* In Northern Ireland 12,326 producers in the severely disadvantaged area and 6,145 producers in the disadvantaged area were entitled to hill livestock compensatory allowances under the 1992 scheme.

Ewe and Suckler Cow Premiums

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will give the figures for the United Kingdom relating to 1993 for the value of the ewe premium and suckler cow premium per head distinguishing the value of any supplements if applicable.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* The final rate of ewe premium for the 1993 marketing year will not be determined by the EC Commission until early 1994. In Northern Ireland two advance payments totalling £12·55 per ewe each for all producers and the supplement of £5·16 per ewe payable to producers in the less-favoured areas only have been authorised.

In Northern Ireland the rate of suckler cow premium in respect of 1993 is £84·51 per cow. Suckler cow producers whose overall stocking density is less than 1·4 livestock units per hectare of forage area will also receive an extensification premium of £28·17 per cow.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Property Schemes

29. **Mr. Tony Banks:** To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners on how many property schemes money has been lost by the Church Commissioners in the last three years.

Mr. Alison: Seven development properties have been sold in the last three years, four at less than their original cost, but not for less than their market value at the time of sale, and three at a profit.

Investment Risks

30. **Mr. Simon Hughes:** To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners what steps are being taken by the Church Commissioners to institute procedures which minimise risks to their investments.

Mr. Alison: Two recent reports on the Church Commissioners make a number of specific recommendations about this. The Commissioners have already acted on some of these recommendations and action on the remainder will follow as soon as possible. The

Commissioners have prepared a note for General Synod about these reports and their response to them and I have arranged for a copy of the note, and of the reports themselves, to be placed in the Library.

Clergy Pensions

31. **Mr. John Marshall:** To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners if he will make a statement about the impact on clergy pensions of the results of Church Commissioners' investments.

Mr. Alison: The current level of clergy pensions is amply covered by the Commissioners' resources. The report of the Lambeth group has, however, recommended that regular contributions should be made to a segregated fund to ensure that accruing liabilities in respect of future service are provided for as they arise and this is under consideration.

33. **Mr. Thurnham:** To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners what representations he has received about the future level of clergy pensions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Alison: None. The Church remains committed to the provision of reasonable pensions and retirement accommodation for its clergy and their dependants. The Lambeth report, which was one of those I referred to in my earlier reply to the hon. Member for Southwark and Bermondsey (Mr. Hughes), has recommended that some features of the existing scheme might be re-examined, and this will be done in the context of that commitment.

Agricultural Land

34. **Mr. Steen:** To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners what is his policy regarding recreational cycling over agricultural land in the Commissioners' ownership.

Mr. Alison: The Commissioners do not have a specific policy. They are always willing to discuss individual proposals, but on a basis that they must seek to obtain a proper financial return from their investments.

Property Damage, London

Mr. Barnes: To ask the right hon. Member for Selby, as representing the Church Commissioners if he will make a statement on the Church Commissioners' plans for Church of England property damaged by Provisional IRA bombing in the City of London earlier this year.

Mr. Alison: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. Lidington) on 17 May, *Official Report,* column *12.*

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Judges

Mr. Dickens: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department how many judges have been appointed since the current Lord Chancellor was appointed.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The total number of judges who have taken up appointment in England and Wales since 27 October 1987 is 348. This figure is made up of seven Law Lords, including Lord Jauncey from Scotland, and Lord Lowry from Northern Ireland, four head of divisions, 23 Lords Justices, 65 High Court judges and 249 circuit judges. These figures include those judges who have been appointed to successive offices in this period.

WALES

Health Service Employees

13. **Mr. Martyn Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the number of employees of the family health services authority in *(a)* Clwyd and *(b)* Wales; and what the figures were 10 years ago.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The number of staff employed by the Clwyd family health services authority at September 1993 was 62·4 whole-time equivalents and the total staff for Welsh family health service authorities is 452·5.

These authorities were set up in 1990.

Voluntary Organisations

14. **Sir David Knox:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the value of grants to voluntary organisations from his Department in the most recent year for which figures are available; and what was the figure for 1978-79, at constant prices.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The total value of direct grants from my Department to the voluntary sector in 1992-93 was £12·3 million; for indirect grants the figure was £201·4 million. The earliest financial year for which directly comparable figures can be determined is 1988-89, when the equivalent expenditure at 1992-93 prices was £7·9 million and £92 million respectively. However, since 1978-79 Welsh Office support for the voluntary sector has trebled in real terms.

Employment Initiatives

15. **Mr. Rowlands:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, pursuant to his oral answer of 21 June, *Official Report,* column 15, what new initiatives he is proposing to reduce male unemployment *(a)* within the valleys initiative area and *(b)* in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: One of the five aims of the latest Programme for the Valleys is the creation of more, better quality jobs. My Department, the Welsh Development Agency, training and enterprise councils, local enterprise agencies, and the local business community will work closely together to achieve that aim. The same applies to all areas of Wales.

Coal Mining Communities

16. **Mr. Simon Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the policies of Her Majesty's Government for Welsh coal mining communities.

Sir Wyn Roberts: I am using the full range of my Department's responsibilities to promote the successful economic development of the Welsh coalfields area.

Welsh Office Budget

17. **Mr. Alan W. Williams:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what are the *(a)* planned and *(b)* expected outturn figures for the budget of the Welsh Office for 1993-94.

Mr. Redwood: Planned expenditure for the Welsh Office in 1993-94, as set out in the departmental report, was £6,316 million. The current estimate of outturn is £6,346 million.

Appointments

18. **Dr. Marek:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the latest total number of appointments for which he is responsible.

Mr. Redwood: The total number of appointments is 789, which includes 14 vacancies. I have today placed in the Library of the House, a list containing biographical details of people holding appointments current on 1 September 1993; it will be revised quarterly.

Unemployment

19. **Mr. Roy Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many people were unemployed in *(a)* Newport, *(b)* Gwent and *(c)* Wales at the latest date for which figures are available.

Mr. Redwood: In September 1993, there were 8,023, 21,794 and 131,556 unemployed claimants in Newport borough, Gwent and Wales respectively.

Manufacturing Industry

20. **Mr. Barry Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the prospects for manufacturing industry in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: Welsh manufacturers' confidence about output for 1994 remains very positive.

National Parks

21. **Mr. Llwyd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he last met representatives of the national parks in Wales to discuss the impact of local government reorganisation upon the national parks in Wales.

Sir Wyn Roberts: I met the chairmen and chief officers of the three Welsh national parks on 16 August.

Manufacturing Investment

22. **Mr. Hain:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the percentage change in manufacturing investment in Wales over the latest available 36-month period.

Mr. Redwood: The annual census of production shows that between 1987 and 1990, net capital expenditure by manufacturing establishments in Wales increased by 80 per cent. in cash terms.

Young People

23. **Mr. Alex Carlile:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will give an estimate of the cost to local authorities in Wales of providing homes for young people who have been subjected to physical and/or sexual abuse; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Social services departments in Wales have direct responsibility for the protection of children where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. They provide a range of services for such children and their families, including, where necessary, placement away from home. It is not possible therefore to provide information in the form requested.

Local Government Finance

24. **Mr. Wigley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received on the funding of local government for the next financial year.

Mr. Redwood: On 13 July I chaired a meeting of the Welsh Consultative Council on Local Government Finance at which I discussed, with representatives of the local authority associations, their assessment of local government's need to spend in 1994-95. I will take account of that assessment in my settlement decisions. However, the settlement will also need to reflect the need to restrain public expenditure to an affordable level.

Grant-maintained Schools

25. **Mr. Richards:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many schools in Wales have expressed an interest in grant-maintained status; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Some 200 schools across Wales, from both the primary and secondary sectors, have shown an interest in grant-maintained status. In response to this interest from schools the Welsh Office has arranged a series of three conferences to provide governors and head teachers with factual information about grant-maintained status.

At 1 September this year there were 11 grant-maintained schools. A further two schools have been approved to become grant-maintained from 1 January 1994. Applications from a further three schools are currently before me for consideration and a number of other schools are in the process of balloting parents.

Arrangements included in the Education Act 1993 will simplify the GM process and I expect the number of grant-maintained schools in Wales to increase significantly.

Local Government Reorganisation

26. **Mr. Sweeney:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what assessment he has made of whether the proposed timetable for the reorganisation of local government in Wales is still likely to be met.

Mr. Redwood: We are planning implementation of the new structure on 1 April 1995 subject to satisfactory parliamentary progress.

Economic Regeneration

Mr. Dickens: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the regeneration of commerce, trade and industry in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: Wales has made great strides in recent years towards becoming a diverse, dynamic and competitive economy. Wales can now compete in world

markets and win and its labour force has demonstrated its ability to take on new working practices and succeed with the best.

A5 (Dualling)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans he has to bring forward the date for commencing the dualling of the A5 across Ynys Môn.

Sir Wyn Roberts: My right hon. Friend's plans for dualling the A5 across Ynys Môn will be kept under review. Work on the first stage between Llanfairpwllgwyngyll and Nant Turnpike is planned to start before April 1996.

School Dinners

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many children have taken school dinners in Wales in each year since 1979; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The numbers of pupils in LEA maintained and grant maintained schools in Wales who took school meals in each year since 1979 are given in the following table:

	Number of pupils[1]
1979	288,348
1980	234,669
1981	244,692
1982	236,499
1983	248,345
1984	252,569
1985	231,155
1986	228,436
1987	225,840
1988	213,341
1989	214,978
1990	216,289
1991	216,026
1992	231,693

[1] Pupils taking midday meals on the schools census enumeration day in September each year.

Drainage, Llandudno

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans his office has to carry out an inquiry into the drainage system of the Llandudno area; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: Dwr Cymru Cyfyngedig is responsible for the foul and surface water drainage system in Llandudno. Following the recent flooding incident the customer service committee for Wales, appointed by the Director General of Water Services, is investigating the matter and has asked the company to provide it with a detailed report.

Floods, Llandudno

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many people are still living in temporary accommodation following the 1993 floods in Llandudno; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: At present 993 people are living in temporary accommodation; 325 are council tenants and 668 are private home owners.

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many known sufferers of Alzheimer's disease there are in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Clwyd, North-West (Mr. Richards) on 27 January 1993 at column *734*.

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans his office has to review its policies in dealing with sufferers of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: It is for health authorities to determine and make provision to meet local health needs. The Welsh Office actively supports the work of the Alzheimer's Disease Society in Wales and is providing over £300,000 towards specific projects and posts.

Road Accidents

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many children have been killed as a result of road traffic accidents in each year since 1979; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is as follows:

Children under 16 years of age killed in road traffic accidents in Wales

Year	*Number of children killed*
1979	36
1980	28
1981	20
1982	30
1983	28
1984	25
1985	28
1986	18
1987	21
1988	21
1989	22
1990	19
1991	19
1992	20

Source: Welsh Office.

Further details on road accidents in Wales are published annually in "Road Accidents: Wales", copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Road Safety

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures his Department is taking to improve road safety in the areas surrounding schools in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: In September, the Government launched the fifth phase of the child pedestrian safety campaign encouraging drivers to reduce their speed in residential areas. Last week, I launched a road safety teaching resource for five to eight-year-olds which included advice on safe journeys to and from school. We have recently installed a number of pedestrian crossings outside schools and are about to commence a variable

speed limit trial outside a school on Anglesey. We have also issued advice to local highway authorities on traffic calming measures and 20 mph speed limit zones.

Flags (Schools)

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is his estimate of the cost of purchasing and erecting a flag pole and purchasing and flying a union flag at every state nursery, infants, primary and high school in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: This is a matter for local determination.

Inward Investment

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is his latest estimate of employment created by inward investment in Wales over the past 10 years.

Mr. Redwood: During the past 10 years, Welsh Development International has recorded some 1,180 inward investment projects for Wales, promising over 114,000 new and safeguarded jobs and a capital investment of £5·5 billion.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what has been the cost of employing management consultants to assist in his Department's assessment of applications for trust status in each wave; how many assessments took place; and which were the consultants concerned.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information is as follows:

1 Application for NHS Trust status from April 1992: Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte; cost £5,698.
14 Applications for NHS Trust status from April 1993: KPMG Management Consulting: cost £70,500.
12 Applications for NHS Trust status from April 1994: CSL Group; cost £25,318.

The management consultants were engaged, via a tendering process, to provide independent advice on the risk/financial management aspects of the applications.

In February 1993, KPMG Management Consulting undertook a development need study on the designate chief executives and directors of finance in the units/ambulance services invited to apply for 1994 trust status. The cost was £35,250.

Departmental Offices

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many civil servants are working in his Department's offices in Gwydyr house, Whitehall.

Mr. Redwood: The number of civil servants working in my Department offices in Gwydyr house, London is 33.

Secure Accommodation

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has had from the area criminal justice liaison committee for Mid, South and West Glamorgan, Dyfed and Gwent with respect to secure accommodation for young offenders and remandees; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I have received one letter on this subject from the chairman of the area criminal justice liaison committee for the three counties of Glamorgan and Gwent to which I replied on 2 September. I am anxious for the planned 18- place secure unit at Neath to be built as soon as possible, and I next look forward to receiving a grant application in respect of the capital costs for this project from West Glamorgan county council.

St. David's Hospital

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received and what consultations he has had regarding the continuation of grade II listed buildings status of St. David's hospital frontage and clock tower subsequent to the fire of Saturday 23 October.

Sir Wyn Roberts: No representations have been made to this Department regarding the listed building status of St. David's hospital frontage and clock tower. I understand that South Glamorgan health authority and Cardiff city council are reviewing the situation caused by the fire and the Department—via Cadw: Welsh Historic Monument's Executive Agency—has offered technical advice.

Cash Limits

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what changes he proposes to make to the cash limits for his Department in the current financial year.

Mr. Redwood: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimates, the cash limit on class XV, vote 2 will be increased by £4,660,000 from £169,280,000 to £173,940,000; the cash limit on class XV, vote 4 will be increased by £436,000 from £151,316,000 to £151,752,000; the cash limit on class XV, vote 5 will be increased by £9,861,000 from £787,498,000 to £797,359,000; the cash limit on class XV, vote 8 will be increased by £7,382,000 from £1,374,344,000 to £1,381,726,000; the cash limit on class XV, vote 9 will be reduced by £141,000 from £65,283,000 to £65,142,000; the cash limit on class XV, vote 10 will be increased by £408,000 from £2,150,156,000 to £2,150,564,000; the cash limit on class XV, vote 12 will be increased by £377,000 from £3,861,000 to £4,238,000. The local authority capital limit—WO/LACAP—will be reduced by £8,576,000 from £417,761,000 to £409,185,000; the cash limit on the European regional development fund—WO/ERDF—will be reduced by £20,000,000 from £70,650,000 to £50,650,000; the urban block cash limit —WO/UA—will be increased by £4,729,000 from £85,696,000 to £90,425,000; the running costs limit for the Department will be reduced by £82,000 from £77,366,000 to £77,284,000. The running costs limit for the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales will be increased by £462,000 from £2,755,000 to £3,217,000.

The increase in the cash limit for vote 2 is in respect of the take-up of end-year flexibility entitlement of £4,660,000.

The increase in the cash limit for vote 4 represents the net effect of (i) an increase of £1,800,000 in respect of the training and vocational education initiative; (ii) an increase of £200,000 in respect of training for work; and (iii) a reduction of £1,564,000 in respect of youth training. The £1,564,000 represents a decrease in provision following a cash limit overspend in 1992-93.

The increase in the cash limit for vote 5 comprises mainly (i) the take-up of end-year flexibility entitlement of £92,000 for running costs; (ii) additional provision for

motorways and trunk roads of £20,395,000, of which £3,065,000 represents the take-up of capital end-year flexibility entitlement; partly offset by (iii) a transfer of £8,500,000 to class XV, vote 6; and (iv) a transfer of £150,000 to class XV, vote 8.

The increase in the cash limit for vote 8 comprises the take-up of end year flexibility entitlement (£7,232,000) and a transfer from class XV, vote 5 (£150,000).

The reduction in the cash limit for vote 9 comprises mainly (i) a transfer of resources to class XV, vote 12 (£479,000); partly offset by (ii) the take-up of end-year flexibility entitlement of £273,000 for running costs and (iii) the take-up of end-year flexibility entitlement of £50,000 for capital.

The increase in the cash limit for vote 10 is in respect of valuation tribunal expenditure.

The increase in the cash limit for vote 12 represents the net effect of transfers of £48,000 and £479,000 from class XV, votes 5 and 9 respectively; partly offset by a reduction of £150,000 in respect of the costs of inspections by registered inspectors.

There are also changes to several non-voted cash limits. The reduction in the cash limit for WO/LACAP represents an offsetting saving to increases elsewhere in the Welsh Office block. The reduction in the cash limit for WO/ERDF reflects lower-than-expected expenditure on ERDF projects in 1993-94.

The increase in the cash limit for WO/UA covers additional provision for the urban programme, urban investment grant and the Cardiff Bay development corporation, of which £3,729,000 represents the take-up of end-year flexibility entitlement.

The entitlement to end-year flexibility for votes 2, 5, 8 and 9 and for WO/UA were announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July. So also was the increase in the Department's running costs limit, which features in both vote 5 (£92,000) and vote 9 (£273,000).

None of the proposed changes will add to the planned total of public expenditure.

EDUCATION

Education Expenditure

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will publish in statistical form expenditure on education as a percentage of gross domestic product in each member state of the European Community.

Mr. Boswell: The readily available information is as follows:

Total public expenditure on education[1] as a percentage of Gross National Product

Country	*Calendar year 1989*
Belgium	[2]5·2
Denmark	7·4
France	5·4
Germany, Fed	4·1
Italy	[3]4·8
Netherlands	6·5
Spain	4·8
United Kingdom	4·6
	(4·7[4])

Sources:
Unesco Statistical Yearbook 1992
Education Statistics for the United Kingdom 1992

[1] Includes subsidies to the private sector.
[2] Ministry of Education only.
[3] 1987 data.
[4] 1990 data.

Student Loans

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has for extending the availability of student loans to postgraduate students in order to bring provisions for their finance into line with that for undergraduate students.

Mr. Boswell: Within the limited resources available, the Government's priority has been to make loans available to full-time undergraduate students and those on courses of initial teacher training. The Government have no plans to extend loans to other postgraduate students, many of whom have access to other resources.

Religious Education

Lady Olga Maitland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority is taking regarding the monitoring of agreed syllabuses for religious education in response to his letter to Sir Ron Dearing of 29 September.

Mr. Robin Squire: We understand that SCAA is already discussing with the local education authorities whose revised syllabuses were analysed earlier this year what amendments might be necessary to reflect more precisely the detailed statutory requirements for RE. Following the issue next year of the Department's revised circular of guidance and national models for agreed syllabuses in RE, SCAA will be monitoring the revision of locally agreed syllabuses in response to section 256 of the Education Act 1993.

Lady Olga Maitland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make a statement on the preparation of model agreed syllabuses for religious education currently being drafted by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Mr. Robin Squire: The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority is working with representatives of the Christian and other faith communities and with teachers to draw up model agreed syllabuses. Wide consultation on draft models is due to begin in the new year, with a view to publishing final versions in the summer.

School Dinners

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many children have taken school dinners in each year since 1979; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Forth: Information on school meal arrangements in maintained schools in England between 1989 and 1992, the latest year for which information is presently available, is shown in the table. Information prior to 1989 is not available on a comparable basis although the results of early school meals censuses were published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy up to 1988 in "School Meal Statistics at October", copies of which are available in the Library.

Numbers of day-pupils taking school meals in maintained schools in England 1989-92
Position as at January each year

	Numbers
1989	3,006,715
1990	2,991,682
1991	2,975,233
1992	3,029,766

Union Flags

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his estimate of the cost of purchasing and erecting a flag pole and purchasing and flying a union flag at every state nursery, infants, primary and high school in England; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Patten: This is a matter for local determination.

Cash Limits

Mr. Couchman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what changes he has to announce to cash limits and running costs limits on votes within his responsibility for 1993-94.

Mr. Patten: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimates, the cash limits for class X, vote 1, schools, research and miscellaneous services, vote 2, higher and further education, vote 4, administration, and vote 6, Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England, will be amended. The cash limit changes are as follows:

Class and vote	*Current cash limit* £	*Change* £	*Revised cash limit* £
X.1	742,847,000	−1,615,000	741,282,000
X.2	5,399,269,000	+5,562,000	5,404,831,000
X.4	92,472,000	+1,829,000	94,301,000
X.6	55,607,000	−6,788,000	48,819,000

The reduction on class X, vote 1 is in respect of a transfer of £1,250,000 to class X, vote 2 for a preliminary scheme of school-centred initial teacher training; a transfer of £250,000 to class X, vote 2 to provide grant to the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit for the initial costs of the family literacy initiative; and a transfer of £115,000 to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, class II, vote 2, as a contribution towards the tuition costs of students coming to the United Kingdom under the European Community TEMPUS programme.

The increase on class X, vote 2 includes an increase of £4,060,000 in grant-in-aid to the Higher Education Funding Council comprising a transfer of £2,460,000 from the Department of Health in respect of the costs of extended and upgraded courses in social work, and a transfer of £1,600,000 from the Cabinet Office (Office of Science and Technology) following the transfer of responsibility to the HEFC for the direct funding of the Institute of Cancer Research. There is also provision of £1,250,000 for a preliminary scheme of school-centred initial teacher training and of £250,000 for the costs of setting up and running the family literacy initiative, both fully offset by a cash limit reduction on class X, vote 1; and an increase of £2,000 in grant-in-aid to the Further Education Funding Council, offset by a transfer from the Chessington Computer Centre, for provision of payroll services upon the centre becoming an agency on 1 April 1993.

The increase on class X, vote 4 takes account of an increase of £1,600,000 under the capital (£1,122,000) and running costs (£478,000) end-year flexibility scheme announced by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993, *Official Report*, cols *512-17;* transfers of £24,000 running costs from the Department for National Heritage, £8,000 running costs from the Office of Public Service and Science and £8,000 running costs from the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys in respect of services provided by my Department; and a reduction of £189,000 in forecast receipts by the Teachers' Pensions Agency to be appropriated in aid of the Vote. The Department for Education's gross running costs limit has been increased by £1,499,000 from £88,824,000 to £90,323,000 as a result of these changes.

The change on class X, vote 6 is in respect of a reduction of £7,172,000 in expenditure related to the inspection of schools, forecast to fall in 1993-94. This is partly offset by an increase of £384,000 in forecast expenditure on the restructuring of Her Majesty's inspectorate. OHMCI's gross running costs limit has been increased by £235,000, from £31,725,000 to £31,960,000.

The increases will be offset by savings transferred from other votes and changes to the Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

PRIME MINISTER

Vietnamese Prime Minister

Mr. Alton: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, columns *11-12*, what action has been taken on the specific human rights cases raised with the Vietnamese Prime Minister during his visit to the United Kingdom.

The Prime Minister: Our embassy in Hanoi continues to raise our human rights concerns with the Vietnamese authorities, most recently on 15 October when the cases of Thich Huyen Quang and the three monks arrested in Hue in May were discussed.

Speeches (Party Conferences)

Mr. Betts: To ask the Prime Minister to what extent civil servants may assist Ministers in drafting speeches delivered at party conferences.

The Prime Minister: Civil servants may provide briefing of a factual nature for Ministers on matters relating to their own Departments. In addition, Ministers in preparing for a conference can draw upon material produced by their Department during the normal course of business.

Writs (Cabinet Ministers)

Mr. Betts: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the Cabinet Ministers whose legal costs arising from writs against them issued by individuals have been wholly or partly met from public funds in the past month.

The Prime Minister: I know of no such cases.

Cash Limits

Mr. Madel: To ask the Prime Minister what proposals he has to change the 1993-94 cash limit or running costs limit for the Cabinet Office: other services vote.

The Prime Minister: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the running costs limit for the Cabinet Office: other services vote (class XIX, vote 1) will be increased by £1,901,000 from £22,513,000 to £24,414,000. At the same time, the cash limit will be increassed by £3,321,000 from £18,313,000 to £21,634,000. This increase reflects the residual transfer of certain administrative functions, following the machinery of government changes announced after the general election, and provides for the transfer of certain other administrative functions and the move to repayment for some common service support as follows:

(a) transfer or running costs provision for superannuation awarding services (£1,617,000);

(b) transfer of running costs provision for central services previously funded by Cabinet Office: Office of Public Service and Science (class XVIII, vote 1) which is offset by an inter-vote payment by that department (£16,000);

(c) transfer of running costs provision (£80,000) for central services offset by a reduction on HM Treasury administration (class XVII, vote 1);

(d) transfer of running costs provision for information services (£249,000) and some central services (£128,000) offset by an increase on Cabinet Office: Office of Public Service and Science (class XVIII, vote 1);

(e) increased appropriations in aid following the transfer of provision for certain central services offset by increases on Department of National Heritage (class XI, vote 7) (£231,000), Central Statistical Office (class XVII, vote 14) (£155,000) and Inland Revenue (class XVII, vote 6) (£12,000).

In addition, as announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993, *Official Report*, cols. *512-17*, this vote is eligible for a cash limit increase of £868,000 in respect of the end year flexibility arrangements for capital expenditure. This supplementary estimate gives effect to the increase. All the increases are either offset by inter-departmental transfers or have been charged to the Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Newspapers

Mr. Hicks: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will make a statement about the report of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission into the distribution and sale of newspapers; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: On 19 August 1992 the Director General of Fair Trading referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission the supply of newspapers from publishers to wholesalers and wholesalers to retailers in England and Wales. The MMC reported to my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade on 30 July. The President of the Board of Trade is currently considering the report and will make a statement in due course.

Cash Limits

Mr. Carrington: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what changes will be made to his Department's cash limits and running costs limit for 1993-94.

Mr. Heseltine: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the cash limit for class IV, vote 1 (support for business, consumer and investor protection, energy programmes and administration) will be increased by £1,051,000 from £1,236,060,000 to £1,237,111,000.

The gross running costs limit for the Department of Trade and Industry is being increased by £875,000 from £327,424,000 to £328,299,000 following transfers from the Department of Employment of £712,000 and Chessington Computer Centre for £581,000 offset by transfers from Her Majesty's Treasury of £135,000 in respect of accommodation costs, £233,000 of OFTEL for personnel services, and £50,000 to the Office of Public Service and Science in respect of a machinery of government transfer.

The supplementary estimate for £1,051,000 on class IV, vote 1 includes an increase of £641,000 in research establishments' capital expenditure as a result of take-up under the end-year flexibility arrangements announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993, *Official Report*, columns *512-17*.

There are some other changes in the allocation of provision. These include a £3,000,000 increase for energy programmes offset by a corresponding reduction of £3,000,000 for industrial research and space, a transfer to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of £500,000 in respect of the Taejon exposition and increased expenditure on the merger between the UKAEA and the Warren Spring Laboratory mostly offset by a reduction in departmental capital expenditure.

In addition, subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the cash limit for class IV, vote 4 (privatisation of the coal industry) will be increased by £4,800,000 from £7,500,000 to £12,300,000. The increase covers the additional costs of privatisation advisers' fees and the commissioning of consultants by management buy-out teams. Provision has also been made in the total for recovery of VAT.

Office of Gas Supply

Mr. Butler: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what changes will be made to the cash limit and gross running costs limit for the Office of Gas Supply.

Mr. Eggar: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the cash limit for class IV, vote 11, Office of Gas Supply, will be increased by £940,000 from £3,006,000 to £3,946,000. The gross running costs limit for the Office of Gas Supply will be increased by £878,000 from £2,953,000 to £3,831,000. The increase provides for the estimated additional costs incurred by the Office in considering the recommendations of the Monopolies and Mergers Commissions' report on British Gas under the Gas Act 1986. Increased provision is sought to cover extra costs due to greater use of consultants, increase in personnel and personnel overheads and change to internal building structure. The increase will be charged to the Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

HEALTH

Amoxycillin

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish for the latest year for which figures are available the total income to her Department from the sale of Amoxycillin on prescription to patients of general practitioners who are not exempt from paying prescription charges.

Dr. Mawhinney: The estimated prescription charge income from prescriptions for Amoxycillin in the calendar year 1992 in England was £12·9 million.

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish for the most recent year for which figures are available *(a)* the total number of prescriptions dispensed in England and Wales for Amoxycillin and *(b)* the total number of prescriptions dispensed in England and Wales to non-exempt prescription charge payers for Amoxycillin.

Mr. Sackville: Information is not available on the number of chargeable prescriptions at individual drug level. Of the 12·6 million prescriptions for Amoxycillin dispensed by community pharmacists in 1992 in England, it is estimated that 3·1 million were issued to patients who are not exempt from prescription charges. There were additionally 3 million prescriptions for Amoxycillin directly dispensed by doctors during the same period; no breakdown of this figure is available by prescription charge category. Information relating to Wales is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales.

Opportunity 2000

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the targets under Opportunity 2000 for women consultants in the years up to 2000.

Mr. Sackville: The goals are to increase the percentage of women consultants from 15·5 per cent. in 1991 to 20 per cent. by 1994 necessitating an annual increase of 10 per cent. and to accelerate the rate of increase in the number of women consultants in surgical specialties from the current 9·7 per cent. per year to 15 per cent. per year by 1994. No goals have been set for post-1994.

Primary Care

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to review the geographical inequalities in primary care expenditure in England.

Dr. Mawhinney: The Government's programme for improving primary health care and delivering services in ways which better reflect the needs of consumers was set out in the White Paper "Promoting Better Health" (Cm 249). We continue to develop this, for example through the revised health promotion arrangements in general medical services which place greater emphasis on better targeting of resources and wider access to health promotion for all patients; by reviewing the arrangements for the provision of general dental services; by encouraging cost effective and quality prescribing; by developing purchasing of community health services that are sensitive to local needs and take account of other primary care services; and by developing the proposals for strengthening primary care in London as set out in our strategy document "Making London Better".

Clinical Grading Appeals

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will list by *(a)* regional health authority and *(b)* district health authority the number of clinical grading appeals that are currently outstanding;

(2) how many grading appeals were still outstanding in respect of the 1988 nurses regrading scheme in each region.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) on 21 October at column *315*. Information on the number of grading appeals outstanding by district health authority is not available centrally.

Junior Doctors

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures she is taking to improve morale among junior doctors.

Dr. Mawhinney: "Junior Doctors: The New Deal", copies of which are available in the Library, sets out a range of measures designed to benefit junior doctors. These include targets for reducing hours of work; the introduction of new, more flexible, working patterns; approaches to reducing the amount of inappropriate work undertaken by junior staff; and recommendations on standards for residential accommodation. This year we are spending some £37 million from central funds in support of the new deal.

We believe that the new deal, together with the continued increase in consultant numbers, which provides improved career opportunities for junior doctors, demonstrates our commitment to improving their living and working conditions to the benefit of patient care.

Consultancy Costs

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the average cost per consultant episode in *(a)* the London teaching hospitals and *(b)* the Southend trust hospital for the latest period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Hospitals, Birmingham

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will visit Birmingham to discuss the situation in hospitals there.

Mr. Sackville: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is kept regularly informed about health services in Birmingham. My hon. Friend the Minister of State was briefed on the current position when he met West Midlands regional health authority officers in September. He has also visited hospitals in and around Birmingham during October this year.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she hopes to appoint a new chairman for the Doncaster NHS healthcare trust; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: Shortly.

Drugs Budgets

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what average amount of money per patient was allocated in 1993-94 to *(a)* fund holding general practitioner practices in north Yorkshire and *(b)* other general practitioner practices in north Yorkshire for their NHS drugs budgets or indicative drug budgets.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

Nurses

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will order health authorities to pay interest on moneys still due to nurses in respect of the 1988 regrading scheme.

Mr. Sackville: No.

Staff Relocation

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the cost of housing and all other benefits paid to departmental staff who moved from the south-east to Yorkshire in 1992-93; and what are the estimated costs in 1993-94.

Mr. Sackville: A total of £8·71 million in 1992-93; £5·68 million in 1993-94.

Office of Population Censuses and Surveys

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes she proposes to the cash limits and running costs limits for OPCS for 1993-94.

Mr. Sackville: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, the cash limit for class XII, vote 6 (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys) will be increased by £989,000 from £32,671,000 to £33,660,000 and the running costs limit of OPCS will be increased by £1,444,000 from £46,695,000 to £48,139,000. This reflects the take up of £238,000 for running costs and £751,000 for capital under the end-year flexibility arrangements announced by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993 at columns *512-17*. The increase in public expenditure will be charged to the Reserve and will therefore not add to the planning total.

It also reflects increased running costs provision of £635,000 and capital provision of £284,000 in the national health centre register area for work on the Department of Health's national health service number programme; increased running costs provision of £10,000 and capital provision of £20,000 for work on the aggregation of local authority wards; increased running costs provision of £561,000 for the work of the Parliamentary Boundary Commission. These increases will be offset by an increase in appropriations in aid on the OPCS vote and met from within the existing resources of the Department of Health (class XII, vote 3) and the Home Office (class VIII, vote 3). This will not add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Consultants

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will give the number of consultants, staff grade and associate grade in England.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is shown in the table. Both medical and dental grades are included.

Number of hospital medical and dental staff in England as at 30 September 1992

Grade	*Number*
Consultant	16,806
Staff grade	755
Associate specialist	966
TOTAL	18,527

Cash Limits

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes she proposes to the cash limits and running cost limits of her Department in 1993-94.

Mrs. Virginia Bottomley: The cash limit for class XII, vote 1 (Hospital, community health, family health services (part) and related services, England) will be decreased by £58,031,000, from £19,938,202,000 to £19,880,171,000. This decrease covers transfer of £104,688,000 to class XII, vote 4 (Family health services (part) and NHS trusts external financing etc., England) for an increase in the NHS trusts' aggregate external financing limit (£88,416,000) and for general practice fund holder drug costs (£16,272,000). The total decrease has been partly offset by the addition of £44,957,000 for take up of entitlement to carry over underspends under the end-year flexibility arrangements as announced by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993 at columns *512-17* and also covers a transfer of £1,700,000 from class XII, vote 3 (Department of Health, administration, miscellaneous health services and personal social services, England) for day and domiciliary care.

Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate the cash limit for class XII, vote 3 (Department of Health, administration, miscellaneous health services and personal social services, England) will be reduced by £3,978,000 (from £1,441,225,000 to £1,437,247,000). This reduction allows for a transfer of £1,700,000 to class XII, vote 1 mentioned above; £2,460,000 to class X, vote 2 (Department for Education higher and further education) for the conversion of social work training courses; £200,000 to class XI, vote 3 (Department of National Heritage: Libraries) for a grant to the Royal National Institute for the Blind and £840,000 to class XIV, vote 13 (Family health services (part) and NHS trusts external financing etc, Scotland) in respect of increased receipts by the health benefit unit. The overall reduction is partly offset by £1,161,000 from class XIII, vote 4 (Department of Social Security, administration and miscellaneous services) (Departmental running costs of £642,000) in respect of departmental administration, accommodation, printing and stationery for the health

benefit unit and a contribution towards the Keep Warm Keep Well Campaign. There is an additional increase of £61,000 on running costs reflecting a new repayment service with the Department of Social Security. The increase is fully offset by increased receipts on Department of Social Security class XIII, vote 4.

The Department's gross running cost limit will be increased by £228,000 from £252,856,000 to £253,084,000. This reflects a reallocation out of running costs of £475,000 to the health benefit unit offset by the effect of transfers from the Department of Social Security mentioned above.

All increases will either be offset by savings or charged to the Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

DSS Headquarters, Leeds

Mrs. Peacock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many members of staff travel from the home counties to the new DSS HQ in Leeds on a daily basis: how they travel; who pays their travel costs; and how much per week is spent by Her Majesty's Government on such travel.

Mr. Sackville: According to this Department's records, Her Majesty's Government pays for no Department of Health staff to travel on a daily basis from the home counties to the new headquarters building in Leeds.

Quarry House, Leeds

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the future level of employment at the NHS Management Executive headquarters at Quarry house, Leeds.

Mr. Sackville: No decisions have yet been made on the future level of employment in the National Health Service Management Executive in Leeds. Future manpower requirements will be determined in the light of decisions on the functions which are to be discharged by the headquarters and the regional offices.

Child Migrant Trust

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 25 October, *Official Report,* columns *501-2,* what consideration she gave during her visit to Australia to the work of the Child Migrant Trust, as indicated in her press notice of 24 August.

Mr. Bowis I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 25 October at cols. *501-2.*

"The Resettlement Game"

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to respond to the recommendations of the Values into Action report "The Resettlement Game", a copy of which has been sent to her; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: I look forward to receiving a copy which we shall, of course, study with interest.

Mental Handicap

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that all NHS learning disabilities trusts comply with the requirements of the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 in enabling residents of mental handicap hospitals to have their housing, health and social care needs met by community-based agencies.

Mr. Bowis: Guidance issued to health and local authorities in 1992, HSG(92)42 and LAC(92)15, stated clearly that health authorities should work with local social services departments to plan the transfer of residents from the old long-stay mental handicap hospitals to community-based facilities as quickly as feasible. The pace of transfer will depend on local circumstances and resources.

Departmental Offices

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many civil servants are working in her Department's offices at Richmond house, 79 Whitehall.

Mr. Sackville: There are 447 Department of Health staff and 174 from the Department of Social Security.

NHS Estate

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will quantify the total cost of the backlog of maintenance on the national health service estate for each district health authority.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 21 October 1993]:* This information will be placed in the Library.

Health Authorities Capital

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to change the system of capital allocation to health authorities other than requiring the payment of interest on capital stock.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 25 October 1993 at column *499.*

DEFENCE

Aldermaston

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress made in repairs to the A91 complex at AWE Aldermaston.

Mr. Aitken: A contract for the repair of A91 was awarded to NNC Ltd. on 12 October 1993.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the sludge solidification system to be used for the treatment of radioactive effluent at AWE Aldermaston is now fully operational; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: The system is not yet operational.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he, or staff at AWE Aldermaston, are currently having with *(a)* Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution and *(b)* the Health and Safety Executive regarding the implementation of interim measures in order to ensure the continued operation of the existing liquid waste treatment plant at the Aldermaston site.

Mr. Aitken: *(a)* HMIP and MAFF, the joint regulators, regularly review with AWE staff the measures required to

ensure the continued operation of the liquid waste treatment systems at AWE Aldermaston. In addition, both HMIP and MAFF frequently inspect and comment on the implementation of these measures.

(b) The HSE is currently carrying out a review of health and safety management at AWE. The general topic of waste and decommissioning will be one aspect of this review.

Low Flying

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the low-flying areas in the United Kingdom which are not under the direct controlling authority of RAF West Drayton; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The following low-flying areas within the United Kingdom are classified as dedicated user areas: LFA 1, LFA 3, LFA 9, LFA 10, LFA 13 and LFA 19. Use of these areas for low flying is co-ordinated locally, except when the local co-ordinating authority is closed in which case control reverts to the tactical booking cell at RAF West Drayton. All other LFAs are controlled from RAF West Drayton at all times.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the low-flying area boundaries in use for daytime flying are also used for the night low-flying system.

Mr. Hanley: No. the United Kingdom low-flying system is based on a different set of low-flying areas which apply to daytime flying. As I told the hon. Member for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley (Mr. Foulkes) on 25 October, *Official Report*, col *485*, a map of the United Kingdom night low-flying system is in the Library of the House.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many aircraft movements into the highlands restricted area were booked in each year since 1981.

Mr. Hanley: It is not our practice to publish detailed information on activity in individual low-flying areas.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many low-flying sorties were undertaken in the United Kingdom low-flying system in the period between sunset plus 30 minutes and sunrise minus 30 minutes, in each year from 1987 to 1992.

Mr. Hanley: Statistics on low-flying sorties during the period of the day specified are not available. Statistics on sorties flown in the United Kingdom night low-flying system are, however, available from July 1989 onwards and are given in the table:

	Sorties
[1]1989	1,601
1990	3,709
1991	2,066
1992	3,520

[1] July to December

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the requirements for individual air force flying units or stations to provide statistics to the military air traffic organisation on the use made of each low-flying area.

Mr. Hanley: In general, statistics on the use of low-flying areas are compiled from information provided by the tactical booking cell at RAF West Drayton and there is no requirement for individual units to provide statistics to HQ military air traffic operations. The following units or flying stations, which are the co-ordinating authorities for dedicated user areas within the United Kingdom low-flying system or which have a dispensation to operate in their local low-flying area without pre-booking through TBC, are however, required to submit statistics on a monthly basis:

RAF Benson
RAF Chivenor
RNAS Culdrose
RAF Leuchars
RAF Lossiemouth
HQ Northern Ireland
RAF Odiham
Salisbury Plain Operations Centre
RAF Spadeadam
RAF Ternhill
Wattisham

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the locations and dates of currently planned presentations by the RAF low-flying presentation team.

Mr. Hanley: Presentations by the Ministry of Defence low-flying presentation team are currently planned to take place on Wednesday 3 November 1993 at Staplehurst, Kent and on Thursday 9 December at Morecambe, Lancashire.

Aircraft Noise

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of the joint United Kingdom-United States-Canadian study on the long-term effects on human health of exposure to aircraft noise; and if he will list any publications by participants in this study.

Mr. Hanley: Initial work on the feasibility of a study to investigate the possible effects on health of noise from low-flying aircraft has been completed and a report is being prepared. My Department is not aware of any publications by participants in relation to the study.

MiG Aircraft Collision

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the minimum authorised altitude for the air display by the two MiG-29 aircraft which collided at RAF Fairford on 25 July; and what was the overall minimum altitude for all participating aircraft in the display.

Mr. Hanley: All participants in the international air tattoo held at RAF Fairford were required to comply with the regulations contained in the Joint Services Publication 318 as follows:

Fixed Wing aircraft performing straight and level flypast—not below 100 feet Minimum Separation Distance (MSD).
Rotary Wing aircraft performing straight and level flypast—not below 50 feet MSD.
Aircraft performing aerobatic manoeuvres and inverted flight—not below 500 feet MSD.
Fixed Wing aircraft performing all other manoeuvres—not below 300 feet MSD.
Rotary Wing aircraft performing all other manoeuvres—not below 100 feet MSD.

Helicopters and vertical or short take-off and landing aircraft may operate below the above MSDs during hovering and transition manoeuvres.

Minesweepers

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what considerations he will take into account when deciding to whom to sell the six River class minesweepers presently for sale.

Mr. Aitken: Our general policy is to support the sale of British defence equipment overseas wherever this is compatible with our political, strategic and security interests, We consider our own national security, our policy towards a particular country, and our international obligations. Subject to these constraints, we will negotiate with interested Governments in order to achieve the best price for the vessels.

Eurofighter 2000

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the progress being made in the development of flight control of software for Eurofighter 2000.

Mr. Aitken: The integrity of the flight control system software is critical to the flight safety of an aerodynamically unstable aircraft such as EF 2000. It is therefore essential that all aspects of the software standard required for first flight are subjected to thorough ground rig testing beforehand. This is taking rather longer than expected and has necessitated a postponement of the first flight, which Eurofighter is now forecasting for April next year. This further delay is disappointing, but there is no indication of any major design problem and it should not be of great significance in overall programme terms. It should not affect the forecast delivery of the first RAF production aircraft in 2000.

Victor Tankers

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he proposes to dispose of the Victor tankers which have been withdrawn following the disbandment of 55 Squadron.

Mr. Aitken: Tenders for the purchase of the aircraft are expected on 4 November and we hope to complete the sale by the end of the month.

Operation Deny Flight

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many combat air patrols have been flown by aircraft of the Royal Air Force since the commencement of operation Deny Flight.

Mr. Hanley: Up to and including 27 October 1993, 540 combat air patrol sorties had been flown by Royal Air Force Tornado F3 aircraft.

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many close air support training missions have been flown by aircraft of the Royal Air Force since the commencement of operation Deny Flight.

Mr. Hanley: Up to and including 27 October 1993, 238 close air support training missions had been flown by Royal Air Force Jaguar aircraft.

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many aircraft of the Royal Air Force, and of what types, are currently deployed in operation Deny Flight.

Mr. Hanley: The Royal Air Force aircraft currently deployed on operation Deny Flight are listed in the table:

	Number
Tornado F3	8
Jaguar GR1	12
Sentry AEW 1	2
Tristar	2

Cash Limits

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes he proposes to the class I cash limits and running costs limit for 1993-94.

Mr. Rifkind: Subject to parliamentary approval of the winter supplementary estimates, the following change will be made:

Class I, vote 1 cash limits

	£ thousands
Current cash limits	12,408,726
Change	–3,510
Revised cash limit	12,405,216

This change decreases the block defence cash limit by £3,510,000 from £23,406,837,000 to £23,403,327,000. It reflects a transfer between the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Environment to enable Plymouth urban development corporation to purchase Royal William yard.

The running costs limit is unchanged.

EMPLOYMENT

Sellafield

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will set out the criteria established for the procedures, remit and timing of Health and Safety Executive studies of the incidence of leukaemia and other radiation effects in relation to British Nuclear Fuels plc's plant at Sellafield.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: As the findings of the 1990 report by Professor Gardner suggested a possible occupational cause for the raised incidence of leukaemia and non-Hodgkins lymphoma in young people near the Sellafield plant, the Health and Safety Executive decided to focus its investigation on the occupational histories of fathers employed at the plant. The purpose of the investigation, which was based on records held by British Nuclear Fuels plc, was to see if the Health and Safety Executive needed to take any specific action to further restrict workplace exposures. At the same time HSE agreed to fund a number of other relevant studies jointly with the Department of Health.

A written protocol specifying the criteria and working methods of the investigation was drawn up and agreed with the workforce and management of British Nuclear Fuels plc and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority. It

was cleared with the medical ethical authorities in December 1990 and work began in January 1991. It was recognised that a full epidemiological study would take some years to complete. Therefore, two short studies based on the case fathers identified by Professor Gardner, were carried out to whether any obvious common factors emerged; neither study pointed to a need for action. Originally, it was envisaged that the main study could be completed in April 1992. However, despite giving the work a high priority, the study took longer to complete because of the volume and complexity of the records that had to be examined and interpreted. This resulted in the report not being finalised until the end of September 1993. The findings of the report suggest that no further preventive action is required to protect the occupational health and safety of the Sellafield work force, over and above the measures which are already in place.

Training and Employment Measures

Mr. Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what communications he has received from the local government international bureau about possible forfeiture by the United Kingdom of money available from the European Community in support of measures to promote training and employment; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: No formal communications have been received from the local government international bureau on this subject, but I understand that it has been raised at meetings with the Department's European social fund unit.

The United Kingdom has not forfeited money made available from the ESF. Acceptance of additional resources from the ESF arising from exchange rate fluctuations was subject to discussions with the European Commission and others about the complex accounting procedures governing the ESF. However a solution has now been found which will enable us to make use of the additional funds.

Higher Education

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is his Department's estimate of the number of people who have completed a course of study at university or a college of further or higher education *(a)* in the last year, *(b)* in the last two years and *(c)* in the last three years and have yet to find employment.

Miss Widdecombe: The Department does not hold information in precisely the form requested. However the Labour Force Survey provides information both on an individual's highest qualification and duration of unemployment. The following table shows unemployment estimates for people qualified to further and higher education levels:

Highest qualification	*Unemployment duration*		
	less than 1 year	*more than one but less than 2 years*	*more than 2 years but less than 3 years*
First degree or above	115,000	25,000	10,000
Higher education below degree	65,000	20,000	5,000
A level or equivalent	375,000	110,000	45,000

European Court

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how the Government intend to respond to the recent decision of the European Court of Justice in the case of Marshall *v.* Southampton and South West Hampshire health authority (No. 2).

Miss Widdecombe: We are urgently seeking powers under section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972 to make regulations to amend the law in the light of this judgment. These regulations will, in particular, remove the upper limit on compensation in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and give industrial tribunals a power to award interest in sex discrimination and equal pay cases. I expect these regulations to come into force during November. Similar regulations are intended for Northern Ireland.

The Marshall judgment was concerned only with sex discrimination. However, the Government believe that other types of discrimination which are similarly prohibited should carry the same penalties as sex discrimination.

The Government will therefore seek a suitable opportunity to amend the penalties available for racial discrimination under the Race Relations Act 1975, to keep them consistent with those soon to be available under the Sex Discrimination Act.

Similarly, my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will seek an opportunity to amend the penalties available for religious discrimination in Northern Ireland under the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1976, as amended.

Radiation, Sellafield

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment on what date the recent Health and Safety Executive study of the incidence of leukaemia and other radiation effects in relation to BNFL's plant at Sellafield was made available to British Nuclear Fuels.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* Pre-publication copies of the report of the findings were sent to British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority on 15 September 1993, following clearance by the Health and Safety Commission for publication.

Disabled People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what was the budget for each of his Department's special schemes for disabled people, and the actual amount available for the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* I have prepared the answer to the hon. Gentleman's question in the form of the following tables:

Budget each scheme £000s

Scheme	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Special Aids to Employment (SAE)	2,218	3,732	5,843	7,143	8,658
Adaptations to Premises and Equipment (APE)	354	495	438	461	522
Fares to Work (FTW)	620	968	1,682	2,028	1,648
Business on Own Account (BOA)	39	54	44	65	82
Job Introduction Scheme (JIS)	609	610	779	486	433
Personal Reader Service (PRS)	395	435	575	523	849

Actual expenditure for each scheme £000s

Scheme	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Special Aids to Employment (SAE)	3,361	4,293	5,602	6,523	6,670
Adaptations to Premises and Equipment (APE)	423	338	449	527	581
Fares to Work (FTW)	853	1,160	1,383	1,648	1,801
Business on Own Account (BOA)	31	17	40	59	40
Job Introduction Scheme (JIS)	614	527	461	410	391
Personal Reader Service (PRS)	453	350	619	807	1,206

SCOTLAND

Departmental Offices

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many civil servants are working in his Department's offices at Dover house, Whitehall.

Mr. Lang: At 28 October 1993, my Department had 39 civil servants working in Dover house.

Cash Limits

Mr. Gallie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what changes he intends to make to the cash limits in running costs for 1993-94 within his responsibility.

Mr. Lang: Yes. Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimates I intend to make changes to six voted cash limits, two running costs limits and in addition the two non-voted cash blocks:—

(a) The cash limit for class XIV, vote 3, training programmes, roads and transport services and industrial support, Scotland, will be increased by £17,437,000 from £728,557,000 to £745,994,000. The increase takes account of an increase in provision of £8,650,000 for grant payments to Caledonian MacBrayne Ltd (offset by a reduction in the company's market borrowing); a transfer of provision of £800,000 from class XIV, vote 17; an increase in provision of £7,287,000 for Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, for the package of employment and training measures announced by the Chancellor in his Budget statement on 16 March 1993, Official Report, cols 169 to 196; a transfer of £1,077,000 provision in respect of Department of Employment employment action; and the uptake of end-year flexibility as announced by the Chief Secretary on 14 July 1993, *Official Report* columns *512-17*.

(b) The cash limit for class XIV, vote 7, housing and environmental services, Scotland will be increased by £152,000 from £418,807,000 to £418,959,000. The increase takes account of a £282,000 increase in provision for running costs as a result of a transfer of £96,000 from class XIV, vote 21; £56,000 as part take-up by Historic Scotland of the Scottish Office end-year flexibility entitlement for running costs; and £130,000 which is covered by a corresponding increase in Appropriations in Aid.

(c) The cash limit for class XIV, vote 12, law, order, miscellaneous health and social work services, Scotland, will be increased by £2,829,000 from £280,703,000 to £283,532,000. The major elements are transfers of provision for running costs; lower than forecast appropriations in aid in respect of the Scottish Prison Service; a £181,000 increase in provision for the Orkney inquiry offset by a corresponding reduction in social work services: and the uptake of end-year flexibility.

(d) The cash limit for class XIV, vote 17, education, arts and libraries, Scotland, will be increased by £1,806,000 from £761,903,000 to £763,709,000. The increase reflects the full uptake of end-year flexibility of £2,606,000, partially offset by a transfer of provision of £800,000 to class XIV, vote 3.

(e) The cash limit for class XIV, vote 21, Scottish Office Administration, will be increased by £1,019,000 from £163,417,000 to £164,436,000. This increase results from additional running cost resources of £600,000 taken up within the agreed limit for 1993-94 offset by a series of inter-Vote transfers totalling £286,000; and take up of £705,000 under end-year flexibility arrangements for running costs. Additional resources will be used to meet increased ERNIC costs, spending on staff and development of information systems to administer reformed EC schemes of agricultural support, making the Scottish Office more accessible through local contact points and telephone enquiry lines and offsetting loss of income from the intervention board.

(f) The cash limit for class XIV, vote 22, Scottish Record Office, will be increased by £67,000 from £10,202,000 to £10,269,000. Within this total, the running cost limit is increased by £15,000 following a transfer from class XIV, vote 21. There is also £52,000 for the uptake of end-year flexibility on capital expenditure. The additional provision will contribute to the cost of installing and running an automatic intruder and flood detection system.

(g) The non-voted cash limit SO/LA1, which covers non-housing capital expenditure by local authorities, is to be increased by £30,604,000 from £590,156,000 to £620,760,000. This reflects full take-up of end year flexibility amounting to £32,604,000 along with a reduction of existing net capital allocations amounting to £2,000,000 to balance an increase on class XIV, vote 8, local environmental services and housing.

(h) The non-voted cash limit SO/LA2, which covers housing capital expenditure by local authorities and capital expenditure by new towns, will be increased by £11,019,000 from £264,395,000 to £275,414,000. The increase takes account of a reduction of £2,000,000 as a result of a transfer to class XIV, vote 11; and an increase of £13,019,000 as a result of the take-up of end-year flexibility entitlement.

(i) The Scottish Office running cost limit will be increased by £2,369,000 from £330,487,000 to £332,856,000. This results from take up of end-year flexibility totalling £1,339,000; a transfer out of £15,000 to

Scottish Record Office; a transfer in of £15,000 to Scottish Prison Service from the Office of Public Service and Science (Class XVIII, Vote 1); £900,000 to cope with increased prison population and administrative work arising from CAP Reforms and the White Paper "Scotland in the Union"; and an increase of £130,000 for Historic Scotland covered by additional income earned this year.

These increases will be offset by savings on other votes and cash limits within my responsibility and by claims on the Reserve. There will not therefore be any addition to the planned total of public expenditure.

Sewage Sludge

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will place in the Library a map showing the boundaries of the sewage sludge dump on the Firth of Clyde.

Sir Hector Monro: A copy of the appropriate map has been placed in the Library.

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is his policy towards the appointment of persons with Conservative party affiliations to NHS trust boards.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* Political affiliation is not a factor in such appointments, which are made on the basis of the personal contribution which the individual concerned can make to the board.

"A Partnership for Good"

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will estimate the total annual costs which will be, or already have been, incurred in fulfilling the commitments made by his Department in the document, "Scotland in the Union—A Partnership for Good."

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* Details of the identifiable costs, both actual and estimated, of implementing specific commitments contained in the White Paper, "Scotland in the Union: A Partnership for Good" are set out in the table. Many of these commitments would have arisen in any case, but all contribute to the White Paper's general thrust to devolve more decision-making power to Scotland and within Scotland.

Proposal or commitment	*Estimated or actual costs*
Europartenariat	[1]40,000
Review of Scottish Trade International	14,000
Publication of concise Annual Report	38,000
Making Scottish Office more accessible to all parts of Scotland	[2]176,870
Publication of Further and Higher Education Charters	86,500
Publication of Householders Guide to Planning	2,210
Publication of Charter on Local Authority Environmental Services	20,600
Publication of Guide to Rights of Private Sector Tenants	3,625
Appointment of Lay Inspector of Constabulary	[3]17,170
Appointment of lay members of schools and colleges inspection teams	[4]15,000
Appointment of lay inspectors to Social Work Sevices Inspectorate	[5]2,600

Comments:
[1] Estimate cost of Scottish Office Industry Department Stand.
[2] Includes initial publicity costs of £150,000; estimated annual running costs are £28,500.
[3] Salary fee for 9 month contract.
[4] Start up costs.
[5] Cost so far incurred.

Sight Tests

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many NHS sight tests took place in each financial year since 1984-85.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* The number of national health service sight tests paid for by health boards in each of the financial years from 1984-85 to 1992-93 is shown in the table.

Number of NHS sight tests

Year	*Number*
1984-85	884,727
1985-86	913,901
1986-87	965,160
1987-88	1,098,145
1988-89	1,168,610
1989-90	[1]475,479
1990-91	432,885
1991-92	496,598
1992-93	538,684

[1] Since 1 April 1989 free National Health Service sight tests have only been available to children, full-time students under 19, those in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit, the registered blind and partially sighted, complex lens users, those who hold an AG2 Examption certificate from the Health Benefits Unit, diagnosed diabetic or glaucoma sufferers and close relatives aged 40 or over of glaucoma sufferers.

Local Government Reorganisation

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations in East Lothian have had their views conveyed to him (i) in favour of his plan to divide the local authority area of East Lothian, and (ii) against that proposal.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* Since the publication of the White Paper, "Shaping the Future —The New Councils", 35 individual letters commenting on the proposal to create a new single-tier authority for Berwickshire and East Lothian have been received from East Lothian, three of which have been in favour of the proposal and 32 against. Of these, 27 letters have come from individuals and eight from organisations. In addition, some 14,000 postcards, pro forma letters and petition signatures have been submitted, mainly from people objecting to the Government's proposals for East Lothian.

Severely Disadvantaged Areas

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what was the net farm income for mainly sheep and sheep and cattle farms in severely disadvantaged areas, in both nominal and real terms for each year since 1978.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* Estimates of net farm income based on results of sample surveys are provided in the following tables. The system of classification changed in 1992-93 and the figures in the two tables are not fully comparable. Year-to-year comparisons on each table can best be made by reference to the indices which are based on results from constant samples of farms.

Table 1
Old classification[1]

	LFA: Mainly sheep				LFA: Cattle and sheep			
	Net farm income		Indices (1989-90 to 1991-92=100)[2]		Net farm income		Indices (1989-90 to 1991-92=100)[2]	
	Nominal terms	Real terms	Nominal terms	Real terms	Nominal terms	Real terms	Nominal terms	Real terms
1978-79	8,100	21,500	74	184	6,900	18,400	48	120
1979-80	5,700	16,200	49	106	3,500	8,200	26	56
1980-81	5,800	11,300	52	97	3,100	6,100	27	51
1981-82	9,700	17,200	99	163	11,000	19,400	87	144
1982-83	7,400	13,400	75	115	9,500	15,600	74	113
[3]1983-84	6,000	9,400	72	106	7,500	11,700	66	97
1984-85	8,400	12,600	94	132	6,100	9,100	60	84
1985-86	13,200	19,600	144	190	8,400	11,900	84	111
1986-87	7,100	9,700	79	101	3,600	4,900	34	43
1987-88	10,200	13,300	118	146	9,300	12,000	102	125
1988-89	10,700	13,300	105	122	12,500	15,500	129	150
1989-90	9,300	10,800	97	105	9,300	10,800	105	113
1990-91	9,300	9,700	95	93	8,400	8,800	92	91
1991-92	9,600	9,600	108	102	10,500	10,500	102	96

Source: Farm Accounts Scheme.
[1] The levels of income have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
[2] Nominal figures deflated by the Retail Price Index, 1991-92=100.
[3] In 1983-84 the lower size limit for farms in the sample was reduced and therefore the figures in that year and later are not fully comparable with earlier years.

Table 2
New Classification[3]

	Specialist Sheep (SDA)				Mixed Cattle and Sheep (SDA)			
	Net Farm Income		Indices (89-90 to 91-92=100)[2]		Net Farm Income		Indices 89-90 to 91-92=100)[1]	
	Nominal Terms	Real Terms	Nominal Terms	Real Terms	Nominal Terms	Real Terms	Nominal Terms	Real Terms
1987-88	8,800	11,600	97	120	9,600	12,600	91	112
1988-89	9,400	11,600	89	104	12,300	15,300	116	135
1989-90	8,600	9,800	91	99	11,100	12,800	105	113
1990-91	8,100	8,500	101	99	10,100	10,500	95	93
1991-92	9,100	9,100	108	102	8,600	8,600	100	94
1992-93[2]	10,800	10,500	149	136	11,600	11,300	110	100

Source: Farm Accounts Scheme.
[1]Net Farm Income figures deflated by the Retail Price Index, 1991-92=100.
[2]1992-93 Net Farm Income figures are provisional.
[3]The levels of income have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

Physiotherapists

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the number of physiotherapists in *(a)* general practitioner practices and *(b)* hospitals, within each health board area, in each of the last four years.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* Information on physiotherapists employed by GP practices is available centrally only from 1 October 1992. Some practices do not classify the categories of staff employed, and from the data available at 1 April 1993 only one physiotherapist can be identified in a GP practice, in the Ayrshire and Arran health board area. Additionally, some physiotherapy services are provided in GP practices by hospital based staff.

The number of phsiotherapists in hospitals, within each health board area, is shown in the table.

NHS Staff employed in physiotherapy as at 31 March

Health Board	1993			1992			1991			1990		
	Total	Qualified	Unqualified	Total	Qualified	Unqualified	Total	Qualified	Unqualified	Total	Qualified	Unqualified
Scotland	1,901	1,682	219	1,842	1,636	206	1,735	1,552	183	1,713	1,531	182
Argyll and Clyde	133	115	18	134	115	19	120	106	14	120	107	13
Ayrshire and Arran	[1]134	[1]125	9	144	136	8	130	124	6	119	116	3
Borders	47	42	5	44	39	5	39	36	3	38	34	4
Dumfries and Galloway	41	35	6	40	34	6	36	30	6	37	30	7
Fife	134	112	22	129	106	23	118	97	21	113	93	20
Forth Valley	90	79	11	83	71	12	73	64	9	76	66	10
Grampian	169	158	11	160	149	11	150	141	9	149	140	9
Great Glasgow	412	357	55	401	354	47	394	355	39	401	361	40
Highland	79	64	15	77	63	14	74	61	13	73	59	14
Lanarkshire	146	139	7	147	140	7	142	136	6	136	130	6
Lothian	334	297	37	306	274	32	299	263	36	291	257	34
Orkney	9	7	2	8	7	1	7	6	1	6	5	1

Health Board	1993			1992			1991			1990		
	Total	Qualified	Unqualified	Total	Qualified	Unqualified	Total	Qualified	Unqualified	Total	Qualified	Unqualified
Shetland	10	8	2	9	7	2	8	6	2	8	6	2
Tayside	145	128	17	142	125	17	132	116	16	131	114	17
Western Isles	18	16	2	18	16	2	13	11	2	15	13	2

[1] Excludes one physiotherapist working in a GP practice.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Low Pay

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people in low-paid employment are subject to a marginal tax/benefit withdrawal rate of *(a)* more than 85 per cent. and *(b)* more than 95 per cent.; and how many in each case have children.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the table.

Numbers with Marginal Deduction Rates at or above each level

	1993-94		Thousands
	Without children	With children	Total
Greater than 95 per cent.	0	(25)	(25)
Greater than 85 per cent.	(5)	120	125

Notes:
1. Calculated for benefit units in receipt of income related benefits where at least one partner works 16 hours or more. Estimates are cumulative and rounded to the nearest 5,000.
2. Figures are based on pooled Family Expenditure Survey data (1989, 1990, 1991).
3. All results are subject to sampling error. Those bracketed are based on a small number of cases and therefore may have wider margins of error.

Deductions from Benefit

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what proportion of claimants have deductions from their benefit at source.

Mr. Burt: Out of 5,088,000 income support recipients, 1,006,000 have one or more deductions from their benefit. The proportion is therefore 19·8 per cent.

Source:
Income Support Statistics Annual Enquiry May 1992.

Notes:
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. Percentage has been rounded to one decimal point.

Independent Living Fund

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what steps he intends to take to ensure that the independent living fund benefits people who are suffering from terminal illness; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: The independent living (1993) fund is an independent and discretionary trust, governed by a board of trustees. All decisions on matters of policy are a matter for the trustees.

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many applications have been received by the independent living fund since 1 April; and how many of these have been approved.

Mr. Scott: I am informed by the director of the independent living (1993) fund that, as at 27 October, the fund has received 575 applications. Of these, 112 have been approved for payment and a further 289 are in the process of being assessed.

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people have applied to the independent living (1993) fund so far in the current year; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: I am informed by the director of the independent living (1993) fund that, as at 27 October, the fund has received 575 applications.

Income Support

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish figures on the same basis as table series 10 in the income support statistics annual inquiry for May 1992 giving the average amount of deduction for each statistical group.

Mr. Burt: Such information as is available is in table 10.1 of the income support annual statistical enquiry May 1992.

Basic Skills

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what proportion of those receiving income support have been assessed as having inadequate basic skills; and what estimate he has of the cost to the Exchequer of this group in the latest available year.

Mr. Burt: The information requested is not available.

Child Support Agency

Mrs. Angela Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will set out the take-on strategy of the Child Support Agency.

Mr. Burt: The Child Support Agency has a phased four year take-on programme of work.

During the first year, the agency will deal with new benefit clients, including an estimated half a million who do not currently receive maintenance, and new non benefit clients without existing court orders or written maintenance agreements who wish to apply. New benefit clients will form the bulk of the work in 1993-94 resulting in assessments for many absent parents who have consciously avoided paying in the past.

The agency has already achieved considerable success in the task of locating parents who previously evaded their responsibilities. Since the agency was launched, the absent parent has been found in over 90 per cent. of those cases where the parent with care does not know his address. In September alone over 2,500 absent parents have been located by the agency's specialist tracing sections.

The agency will also take on existing benefit clients, where the parent with care or their current partner was already receiving income support prior to 5 April, over a three year period. In addition, the agency will consider

sympathetically, in the light of their individual circumstances, any existing benefit client who seeks to be taken on early, including those where the absent parent has been avoiding paying maintenance.

The agency is now dealing with existing benefit clients who already receive maintenance and where the whereabouts of the absent parent is known. Many of these will be clients where a change of circumstances triggers take on of the case; this avoids double handling by dealing with the case then rather than another occasion. The agency is now dealing with some existing benefit clients who are not receiving maintenance, and will be steadily taking on more. It will normally prioritise such cases according to whether or not a regular maintenance payment can be secured, again in order to secure the maximum benefit to parents with care quickly, but will have taken on all such cases by April 1996.

During the last stage of the programme, in 1996-97, the agency will phase in those parents with care with existing maintenance agreements who do not receive income support, family credit, or disability working allowance, who wish to be taken on. This will be in line with a staggered programme according to the first letter of their surname.

This strategy means that more children will receive more maintenance more regularly. It does this in the most administratively efficient manner, and in a way which will most economically reduce the burden on the taxpayer.

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) in how many cases the parent with care has refused to provide information to the Child Support Agency as to the identity of the absent parent; and in how many of those cases the absent parent has been traced by the Child Support Agency in the first six months of operation;

(2) how many applications for maintenance assessments have been *(a)* received and *(b)* processed by the Child Support Agency in its first six months of operation;

(3) in how many cases the Child Support Agency has decided that there have been good causes for the refusal to co-operate by those parents with care who have chosen not to co-operate with the Child Support Agency;

(4) in how many cases processed by the Child Support Agency since April the absent parent has been part of a second family;

(5) how many applications made to the Child Support Agency have been processed and put into payment in the first six months of the agency's operation; how many of these assessments are being collected by the agency; and how many are being collected by other means;

(6) how many parents with care have *(a)* chosen not to co-operate with the Child Support Agency and *(b)* been unable to provide information as to the identity of the absent parent in the first six months of the Child Support Agency's operation.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Mr. Kevin Hughes, dated 29 October, 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking about various aspects of the work of the Child Support Agency.

You ask about cases where the requirement to cooperate has been an issue. The number of such cases to 30 September is 6,600 and in 4,900 of these the Agency has accepted that the parent with care had good cause not to co-operate with the Agency in pursuing a maintenance claim. Tracing action is only taken when the parent with care has been able to provide sufficient information on the father to make such action feasible.

At 30 September 328,700 Maintenance Assessment Forms had been returned and 36,610 maintenance assessments completed.

You also ask about the collection of maintenance. Information on maintenance being collected is not currently available but will be available later in the year. I should explain that once the Agency has assessed an absent parent's maintenance payment, the maintenance can be paid direct to the parent with care rather than through the Agency.

I am sorry but we do not collect statistical information on how many absent parents have a second family.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Miss Emma Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish information relating to the performance of the Child Support Agency on a regular basis.

Mr. Burt: I am pleased to announce that I intend to place information in the Library of the House each month relating to key performance areas of the Child Support Agency. An initial report, covering the first six months of the agency's operations, will be placed in the Library today.

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how many and what proportion of Child Support Agency assessments to date involve the protected income calculation to decrease the maintenance assessment; and how many and what proportion of assessments to date exceed the maintenance requirement;

(2) if he will publish a table showing the average assessment made by the Child Support Agency, broken down into the average assessment for families of one qualifying child, two qualifying children, three qualifying children and four or more qualifying children;

(3) if he will publish a breakdown of the range of net income and exempt income of absent parents assessed by the Child Support Agency.

Mr. Burt: I understand from Ros Heppelwhite, the chief executive of the Child Support Agency that the information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bill Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many *(a)* maintenance application forms have been issued, *(b)* assessments have been completed, *(c)* benefit penalties have been imposed and *(d)* good cause claims have been accepted and how many refused in respect of the Child Support Act 1991 (i) nationally and (ii) in the Sheffield area.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Mr. Bill Michie, dated 29 October 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many (a) maintenance application forms have been issued, (b) assessments have been completed, (c) benefit penalties imposed and (d) good cause claims have been accepted and how many refused in respect of the Child Support Agency (i) nationally and (ii) in the Sheffield area.

The information available in answer to your question about national figures is shown below but I am sorry that we are not able to provide a geographical breakdown for the Sheffield area.

At 30 September 527,000 Maintenance Application Forms (MAFs) had been issued, and 36,610 maintenance assessments completed.

The number of cases where the requirement to co-operate has been an issue up to 30 September 1993 is 6,600 and in 4,900 of these the Agency has accepted that the Parent with Care had good cause not to co-operate in pursuing a maintenance claim. Of those cases in which "good cause" was not accepted, 22 Reduced Benefit Directions have been issued and the cases referred to the Benefits Agency to implement the prescribed reduction.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Reciprocal Agreement (Australia)

Ms Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security whether he proposes to revise the reciprocal agreement with Australia concerning social security matters.

Mr. Hague: We have no plans to do so.

Cash Limits

Mr. Jacques Arnold: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what changes there have been in the cash limits or running costs limits of his Department.

Mr. Scott: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate the cash limit for class XIII vote 4 will be increased by £30,958,000 from £2,527,166,000 to £2,558,124,000. The revision takes account of increased requirements resulting from rising workloads (£8,566,000 running costs), an increase of £23,434,000 (of which £12,628,000 is running costs) in respect of the end year flexibility arrangements, a reduction of £1,531,000 (running costs) offset by a corresponding increase on Department of Health and Social Services (Northern Ireland), vote 3, an increase of £20,000 in running cost cover for services provided to Department of Health and Social Services (Northern Ireland) on repayment, a transfer to Department of Health, class XIII, vote 3, of £1,161,000 (of which £1,065,000 is running costs) and a reduction of £99,000 in appropriations in aid.

As a result of these changes and the running costs limit of the Department of Social Security will be increased by £18,432,000 from £2,902,578,000 to £2,921,010,000.

The additional requirements will be charged to the Reserve and will therefore not add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Benefits

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans there are to set down charter standards for take up of benefits.

Mr. Burt: There are no such plans.

Social Security legislation puts the onus on the individual to claim benefit. Some people choose not to claim. It would be inappropriate to set targets or standards for something which is a matter of personal choice. The Government's role is to ensure that the availability of benefits is made known and to provide advice on eligibility.

In this respect, we have recently launched a major advertising campaign to explain how in-work benefits can help families back to work and opened a family credit telephone helpline. The Benefits Agency is responsible for a number of initiatives to increase awareness of entitlement including exhibitions, talks and multi-lingual telephone helplines.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what consideration has been given as to whether a tax credit system for paying benefits is feasible and would be more effective at delivering benefits.

Mr. Hague: There has been no recent serious considerations of a tax credit scheme as a means of delivering Social Security benefits. A tax credit scheme as sometimes proposed would not replace the need for income-related benefits which take account of family size and housing costs, and would be less responsive in dealing with short-term financial needs. We have, instead, concentrated on developing simpler tax and benefit regimes which reduce overlaps between the two systems and provide help to those in need whilst maintaining the incentive to work.

Mr. Hicks: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he intends to undertake a review of the notional return on a person's investments for assessment for benefit entitlements; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Burt: In all the income-related benefits, capital up to £3,000 is ignored. The formula applied for capital above this figure does not imply any particular return on investments. It ensures that help is targeted to those who need it most, while not denying benefit to those with only a moderate amount of capital. The rules are kept under review, but we have no plans for change.

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what information he has as to which EC countries have provisions enabling benefits to be reclaimed in the same way as under section 22 of the Social Security Act 1989.

Mr. Scott: The information requested is not held by the Department and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Spending

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what comparative figures he has on the administrative costs as a proportion of social security spending in the United Kingdom and other members of the European Community.

Mr. Scott: The latest information available on administrative costs as a proportion of social protection (social security plus health) spending in each member state of the EC is contained in the Eurostat publication, "Social protection expenditure and receipts 1985-1988". Care must be taken when comparing any European data sets because of differences in definition.

Eurostat regularly publishes "Social protection expenditure and receipts". The latest edition covers the period

1980-91 and includes more recent data on administrative costs, but does not show these as a proportion of social protection spending.

Copies of both publications are in the House of Commons Library.

Social Fund

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what are the costs of administering the social fund as a proportion of its total budget.

Mr. Scott: The latest available information on social fund administrative costs is given in the Social Security departmental report, "The Government's expenditure plans 1993-94 to 1995-96", a copy of which has been placed in the Library.

Severe Disability Allowance

Mr. Austin Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many applications for severe disability allowance from women who have reached the age of 60 years have been received and are currently awaiting determination; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: The information requested is not available.

Following the Court of Appeal's decision in the case of Thomas and Others (July 1990), claims for severe disablement allowance from women aged between 60 and 65 have been determined in the same way as for men of the same age.

Child Maintenance

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many absent parents on income support have deductions from benefit made as a contribution towards child maintenance.

Mr. Burt: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) on 29 October 1993 at column 843-44.

Accident Victims

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans his Department has to review or repeal section 22 of the Social Security Act 1989, relating to reclaims of benefits paid to accident victims.

Mr. Scott: We have no such plans.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 2 November 1993

HOUSE OF COMMONS

National Audit Office

Mr. Nicholls: To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission on what basis the National Audit Office hypothesises its charges for work carried out on behalf of Government Departments and agencies; if, for the purposes of market testing, the NAO calculates its charges on a full cost basis, as defined by the Treasury; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Peter Hordern: In line with the National Audit Act 1983, the National Audit Office currently has ministerial consent to charge for the audit of trading funds, for the audit of accounts which are trading type activities, and for all audits undertaken by agreement. The National Audit Office calculates its fees for such work on a full cost basis in line with the Treasury fees and charges guide. The National Audit Office currently contracts out some 8 per cent. of its financial audits and also assumes a full cost basis in line with the Treasury guidance when comparing its internal costs with those of the private sector on these accounts.

Vote Bundle

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee what is the annual cost of the provision of the Vote bundle.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: The cost of 699,370 copies of the Vote bundle delivered to the House for the year ended 31 March 1993 was £6,670,978.

Ibbs Report

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Finance and Services Committee if he will review the progress of the implementation of the Ibbs report and issue a report to the House.

Mr. Channon: Details of the progress of the implementation of the Ibbs report have been set out in the annual reports of the House of Commons Commission for 1991-92 and 1992-93. With the exception of the proposal to transfer the grants in aid to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the British American Parliamentary Group and the History of Parliament Trust from HM Treasury to the House, the major structural recommendations of the report have been carried out. The Finance and Services Committee will continue to review the financial management of House services in conjunction with the Accounting Officer and the Heads of House Departments, but it is not its normal practice to issue reports to the House.

Services (Value for Money)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Finance and Services Committee if the Finance and Services Committee will undertake a study of the value for money obtained by House of Commons services.

Mr. Channon: A rolling programme of audits of House services is already being carried out by the internal auditor and his staff under the supervision of the Finance and Services Committee as the audit committee of the House. The studies seek to measure and evaluate the systems of internal controls and include a value-for-money scrutiny of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Committee intends to keep the programme under review and ensure that it covers the activities of all Departments of the House.

Serjeant at Arms' Conference

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Finance and Services Committee what is the estimated cost of the Serjeant at Arms' Commonwealth conference proposed for 1994.

Mr. Channon: It is too early to give a firm estimate of the likely cost of the conference. The question of funding will be considered by the Finance and Services Committee when it prepares the departmental estimates for 1994-95 for submission to the House of Commons Commission.

Members' Offices

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Accommodation and Works Committee how many rooms are at the disposal of the Committee for the use of hon. Members.

Mr. Ray Powell: A total of 535 rooms are, or will soon be, available within the Parliamentary Estate for allocation to right hon. and hon. Members. Some of these rooms are set aside for officer holders. This number includes 113 in 7 Millbank.

Mice and Rats

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Chairman of the Accommodation and Works Committee what steps are being taken to tackle the problem of mice and rats in the Palace of Westminster.

Mr. Ray Powell: A new contract has recently been agreed with a specialist company to deal with pest control in the Palace of Westminster. In addition, Departments have been reminded of the formal reporting procedures and disciplines which exist to inhibit these pests.

All-party Groups

Mr. Allen: To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will bring forward proposals for guidelines regarding the use by all-party groups of outside companies or organisations as a secretariat.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: The Administration Committee has responsibility for the regulation of all-party and parliamentary groups; and, as its Chairman, I have been asked to reply. The Committee would be prepared to consider any proposal for the improvement of the regime for their control. If my hon. Friend has any such suggestion, he should submit it in writing.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Visas

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visa applications were made for entry into the United Kingdom from applicants from the Philippines in each of the three latest years for which figures are available; and how many were *(a)* accepted and *(b)* rejected.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The numbers of visa applications made, accepted and rejected, from applicants in the Philippines in the last three years are shown in the table.

	[1]1993	1992	1991
Received	11,255	13,637	11,926
Granted	10,090	12,033	10,571
Refused	1,030	1,435	1,161
Decisions outstanding	135	169	194

[1] January to September.

Human Rights

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith) of 19 October, *Official Report*, column *205*, if he will make a statement on Her Majesty's Government's reservations on the changes proposed at the Council of Europe summit on 8 and 9 October, in the exercise of the rights of citizens of member states under the European convention on human rights.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have entered no such reservations, and look forward to the presentation of a final text at the Council of Europe ministerial meeting in May 1994.

Belize

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs with which countries discussions have taken place to ensure Belize's continued territorial independence; when they started; and with which countries he intends to begin such discussions.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The sovereignty and independence of Belize are recognised by all members of the United Nations. Belize is also a member of the Organisation of American States. We have made clear our readiness to participate with others in any consultations Belize may request on its future security. It would not be right for me to disclose the content of any discussions.

Mafia

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what calls he has received from the Italian Prime Minister, Carlo Ciampi, for international co-operation on tax havens, offshore financial centres and bank secrecy laws, as measures to stop the Mafia laundering money; and what response he has made.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: None.

Sweden (Asylum Seekers)

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations have been made to Sweden about its policy with respect to Jewish asylum seekers.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: None. Sweden is a signatory to the 1951 convention relating to the status of refugees and we expect it to abide by its obligations.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Faber: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the policy of Her Majesty's Government on support for the political party of Mr. Vuk Draskovic, the SPO in Serbia; and what pressure has been put on Mr. Draskovic during recent meetings to take part in the democratic process in Yugoslavia.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister sent a message of support to Mr. Draskovic's party at the time of his detention by the Serbian authorities in June 1993. Mr. Draskovic and his party remain politically active. We continue to encourage parties promoting democracy in Serbia.

Mr. Faber: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps Her Majesty's Government will be taking to encourage Mr. Alija Izetbegovic to reach a peace accord with the other parties concerned following the peace accord between Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Serbs; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We and our partners continue to make clear our support for the efforts of the co-chairmen of the international conference to secure a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Bosnia, and our readiness to support a settlement which has the full agreement of all parties.

Public Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Goodlad: The diplomatic wing of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not yet identified any public investment projects which have attracted private capital. The Overseas Development Administration associates itself with private finance through the aid and trade provision; through the joint funding scheme with non-governmental organisations—where the aid wing matches its contributions on a pound for pound basis—and by sponsoring the Commonwealth Development Corporation which funds investment projects in developing countries, particularly in the private sector, in partnership with a range of public and private investors.

Overseas Visits

Dr. John Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what has been the total cost to public funds of his journeys abroad since April 1992.

Mr. Hurd: The total cost of overseas visits by me and my accompanying officials in the period April 1992 to

August 1993, excluding those in an EC capacity, was £1·377 million of which £656,000 was paid to the RAF for use of its planes.

The period covers the United Kingdom presidency of the EC during which I paid a number of visits in an EC capacity, the costs of which are borne by the presidency in office. These amounted to £658,000 of which £178,000 was paid to the RAF.

TRANSPORT

Cash Limits

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proposals he has to change his Department's cash limits and running costs limit for 1993-94.

Mr. MacGregor: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimates and the passage of the Railways Bill, the following changes will be made: the cash limit for class VI, vote 2—administration and transport services—will be reduced by £2,069,000 from £204,305,000 to £202,236,000 and the Department's running costs limit will be reduced by £4,215,000 from £432,989,000 to £428,774,000. The changes include the transfer of funds for administration and miscellaneous services to OPRAF class VI, vote 7 and to ORR class VI, vote 8. These reductions are partly offset by the take-up of capital and running costs end-year flexibility entitlement as announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993 at columns *512-18* and a transfer of funds from the Defence Research Agency for repayment services.

The increases will be offset by transfers and a charge on the Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Mr. Sedgemore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish forthwith submissions and evidence made to him by Union Railways about intermediate stations and bids by Stratford, Rainham and Ebbfleet in relation to the channel tunnel rail link; and if he will instruct Union Railways to make its background papers available to the public as regards the intermediate stations.

Mr. Freeman: The published version of Union Railways' report will include information on intermediate stations. Publication of the bids by individual promoter groups is a matter for them. Commercially confidential material will not be published.

Mr. Sedgemore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish forthwith the report submitted to him by Union Railways in the channel tunnel rail link.

Mr. Freeman: I refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave to the hon. Member for Newham, South (Mr. Spearing) on 29 October 1993 at columns *809-10.*

Hams Hall Railfreight Depot

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the announcement of the outcome of the planning inquiry into the Railfreight depot at Hams Hall.

Mr. Freeman: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given today by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment, *Official Report,* column *102.*

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Public Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Waldegrave: My Department continues to seek opportunities for joint funding with the private sector of capital and other projects connected with the science base, and to examine the scope for involving the private sector in other areas of the Department's responsibilities. On 10 March 1993, I announced that the United Kingdom is to host the European Bioinformatics Institute at Cambridge, which will be funded jointly by the Government and the Wellcome Trust.

Cash Limits

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what changes he proposes to the estimates, class XVIII, vote 2—science.

Mr. Waldegrave: The cash limit for this vote is being reduced by £1,600,000 from £1,165,150,000 to £1,163,550,000. This reduction reflects the transfer of responsibility for core funding of the Institute of Cancer Research from the Medical Research Council to the Higher Education Funding Council (England) class X, vote 2.

The opportunity of the winter supplementary estimates will also be taken to change the ambit of the vote to allow the Science and Engineering Research Council to prepare for the establishment of the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and for grant to be paid for other initiatives following the publication of the White Paper "Realising our Potential".

PRIME MINISTER

Human Rights

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Dartford (Mr. Dunn) of 26 October, *Official Report,* column *589,* on the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, what representations he made to the Government of India regarding abuses of human rights in Kashmir and the Punjab.

The Prime Minister: We regularly raise our concerns about Kashmir, Punjab and human rights with the Indian Government, most recently during a discussion between my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and Dr. Manmohan Singh, head of the Indian delegation to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in October.

Official Secrets Act 1989

Mr. Allason: To ask the Prime Minister when *(a)* Desmond Bristow and *(b)* Brian Crozier received permission to publish their memoirs under the requirements of the Official Secrets Act 1989.

The Prime Minister: The legal advisers to the publishers of Mr. Bristow's memoirs were informed on 26

January 1993 that the text of his book did not contain any material damaging to national security. Mr. Crozier was informed on 27 May 1993 that, while the Crown would not authorise his book, it would not prejudice national security provided that certain amendments and deletions were made to the text.

Engagements

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 2 November.

The Prime Minister: This morning I had meetings with ministerial colleages and others. In addition to my duties in the House I shall be having further meetings later today.

PM's Office

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister what was the Property Services Agency's annual charge at the latest available date for buildings and services relating to his office; and what were the categories of expenditure.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The Property Services Agency ceased to exist in April 1990; Property Holdings took on responsibility for building services on the civil estate from that date.

Property Holdings' annual charge in respect of 10 Downing street in 1993-94 is as follows:

	£
Rent	600,307
Rent surcharge	54,028
New works	158,021

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister what was the cost to his office in 1988-89 of major redecoration of state rooms and of major and security works; and how these costs were broken down.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The cost of refurbishing the state rooms in 1988-89 was £499,422.

It is Government policy not to disclose the cost of works relating to security requirements.

Major works were the responsibility of the Property Services Agency in 1988-89. No costs for major work fell to my office in this period.

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister what office services were ascribed to his office in 1986-87 and in the latest available year; and how much was charged for these services and by whom, in each year.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The following office services were ascribed to my office: office manager, typing support, messengers, stationery supplies, postage, laundry and cleaning, office cleaning. The costs were as follows:

Year	£
1986-87	543,000
1992-93	891,000

The cost to my office was charged by the Cabinet Office and a number of private sector suppliers.

Chequers

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister what was the annual charge to his office by the Ministry of Defence at the latest available date for *(a)* the use of aircraft and *(b)* the use of service personnel at Chequers.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* For 1992-93 the charge to my office by the Ministry of Defence for the use of aircraft was £145,559 and for the use of service personnel at Chequers, £230,331.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

European Economic Area

Mr. Spearing: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will set out in the *Official Report* either under topic heads related to the responsibilities of Her Majesty's Ministers, or in article order of the latest version of the treaty of Rome, as amended by both the Single European Act and union treaties, any derogation from its terms applying to the member states of the European Economic Area who are not also member states of the European Community and its associated union.

Mr. Needham: The European economic area agreement does not extend Community policies in the following areas to the European Free Trade Association states which are contracting parties to the EEA: the common commercial policy and the common customs tariff—my Department—the common agricultural policy and the common fisheries policy—Agriculture Ministers—cohesion policy—my Department—and Community financial and fiscal policies—Chancellor of the Exchequer. The EFTA states will not be bound by the provisions of the treaty on European union.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will ensure that all those matters listed in the proposed new clause 5 to the European Economic Area Bill considered in the House, *Official Report*, 21 October, columns 467-69, are included in that section of the six-monthly reports to Parliament on European Community affairs which is to be devoted to the European economic area.

Mr. Needham: The section on the European economic area, which is to be included in the six-monthly White Paper "Developments in the European Community", will contain a general account of developments within the EEA, nothing any significant decisions made by the EEA council or the EEA joint committee. This will be supplemented by a further report to Parliament on developments in the EEA in the form of an explanatory memorandum accompanying the annual report of the EEA joint committee on the functioning and development of the EEA agreement, which arises from article 94 of the agreement. Under the terms of the EEA, all decisions of the EEA joint committee will be published, including those extending new legislation to the EFTA states, in a new EEA supplement to the *Official Journal* of the EC. Parliament will already have had an opportunity to consider new provisions to be added to the agreement under scrutiny procedures agreed with the European Legislation Committee.

Packaging

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects to reply to the report of the Lords Select Committee on the European Communities report on packaging and packaging waste—HL 118-I.

Mr. McLoughlin: I can inform the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent that we will be replying to the report shortly.

Nuclear Reactors

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will set out the reasons underlying the legal basis evaluation relating to the Euratom treaty made in his departmental explanatory memorandum 8492/93 of 10 October, on the communication from the Commission to the Council on the future of testing reactors in the Community (Com (93) 408 Final).

Mr. Eggar: The reason for the doubt expressed in the Department's explanatory memorandum is that the Commission's proposal for a Council resolution does not specify which article of the treaty it relies on; and it is not clear from the document that such action by the Community is necessary to attain one of the objectives of the Community, nor, if so, which particular objective.

Carbon Emissior

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will provide a breakdown of the sources of the "other emissions" of carbon listed in table 2, page 182, of the digest of United Kingdom energy statistics 1993.

Mr. McLoughlin: The breakdown requested is as follows:

Carbon dioxide emissions in 1991, million tonnes of carbon

Source of non-fuel emissions	*million tonnes*
Incineration:	
Domestic	0·5
Agricultural	1·1
Cement production	1·7
Landfill sites	0·8
Offshore gas flaring	1·4
Total "other emissions"	5·5

Literacy

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment he has made of the contribution of literacy skills to industrial competitiveness; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Sainsbury: Good literacy skills are essential to industrial competitiveness. According to a recent report by the Government-funded adult literacy and basic skills unit, the cost to British industry of poor basic skills among the work force is almost £5 billion a year. The raising of standards is a top priority for the Government's policies for education, both at school, via the national curriculum and the testing arrangements that go with it, and for adults, for whom basic skills provision is a specific responsibility of the new further education funding councils.

EC Assistance

Ms. Quin: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what proportion of the United Kingdom's population is covered by the Government's application to the EC for objective 2 status.

Mr. Sainsbury: Forty-one per cent.

Nuclear Energy

Mr. Redmond: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what consideration his Department's nuclear review has given to the possible cost-effectiveness of investment in nuclear plant to achieve reductions in carbon dioxide emissions.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I made to him on 26 October 1993, at column *572*.

Private Capital

Ms Harman: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Eggar: My Department's capital investment projects, other than office accommodation, are primarily undertaken at its research establishments. My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade announced on 4 May 1993, *Official Report*, column *4*, that he was reviewing the future of these establishments with the assistance of independent consultants. The opportunities offered by the private finance initiative will be taken into account in the course of this review. More generally much of the rest of my Department is also under review to identify the scope for increased private sector involvement.

Oil and Supplies Industries

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what he has done to help the United Kingdom oil and supplies industries in their efforts to secure business overseas.

Mr. Eggar: In order to promote the United Kingdom's wide ranging expertise in the energy sector, I have recently visited Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Kazakhstan and Algeria. I hope that my visit to these countries will provide opportunities for the United Kingdom oil and supplies industries to participate in the development of their energy resources. My offshore supplies office will continue to support United Kingdom companies' efforts in this regard.

Following my visit to Indonesia and Malaysia, the offshore supplies office will hold seminars early next year in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur to present lessons learned and experience gained from recent initiatives aimed at reducing the costs of United Kingdom continental shelf oil and gas developments.

Tourism

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps are being taken to prevent the EC draft directive currently under consideration which would prevent holidaymakers sending deposits in advance to book hotel and guest house rooms from being implemented in a way which would have the effect of preventing the normal trading operations of Britain's hoteliers, self-catering and guest house operators.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* The United Kingdom has made clear, during the discussion of the draft distance selling directive in Brussels, its opposition to the provision which would ban prepayments in the case of contracts negotiated at a distance. There can be no question of our agreeing to the directive so long as this provision remains.

Ice Cream

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when the Monopolies and Mergers Commission will be reporting on the practice of cabinet exclusivity agreements in relation to ice cream manufacturers and retailers; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The Director General of Fair Trading, Sir Bryan Carsberg, referred the supply of impulse buy ice creams to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission on 7 May 1993. The Commission was asked to report to my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade within nine months.

RECHAR II

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the progress towards establishing the RECHAR II programme from 1 January 1994.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* RECHAR II and all other proposals for future Community initiatives for European structural funds grants are to be discussed by the Council of Ministers, and then by a management committee of officials, before any such initiative is launched. No date has yet been set for such discussion.

Konver Programme

Mr. Pope: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what discussions he has held with the European Commission about the use of funds under the Konver programme to assist larger defence contractors.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* None. In accordance with the Government's usual policy on the use of grant available from the European structural funds, I have proposed that such UK Konver grants as may benefit companies should be confined to small and medium-sized enterprises. As is the case with structural funds grants generally, most UK Konver grants will not be made directly to companies.

ECGD

Mr. Morgan: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what consultations he has had in relation to the long-term future of the Export Credits Guarantee Department, Llanishen and Cathays park, Cardiff; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Needham: *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* I have held two meetings with ECGD's trade union side which included discussion of the long-term future of its Cardiff offices. I confirm my endorsement of the recommendation of the ECGD management board in November 1992 that there should be no major change to the distribution of functions between London and Cardiff for at least three years from that date.

Warship Yards

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will place in the Library the text of the case for intervention funding for British warship yards referred to in his reply to the hon. Member for Tynemouth (Mr. Trotter) of 20 October, *Official Report*, column *246*.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* No. It is not the Government's policy to make available publicly the details of correspondence with EC commissioners.

South Africa

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Brecon and Radnor (Mr. Evans) of 25 October, *Official Report,* column *433,* what actions his Department has taken to ensure that companies file reports under the EC code of conduct relating to South Africa for the year ended 30 June.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Following the decision taken by the EC Foreign Affairs Council on 4 October to discontinue the code of conduct, British companies have been informed that reports are no longer required.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the Government's policy towards wage levels and employment conditions provided by British comapnies continuing to operate or seeking to operate in South Africa.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* British companies have an excellent record on wages and employment conditions in South Africa. We will encourage companies to continue these high standards.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will publish a table showing whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests of each executive non-departmental public body sponsored by his Department.

Mr. Sproat: *(a)* I refer to the answer I gave to the hon. Member on 27 July 1993, *Official Report,* columns *763-64.*

(b) The public do not have a statutory right to inspect the minutes of meetings of any of my Department's executive NDPBs.

(c) NDPBs publish on a regular basis reports which the public can see.

(d) NDPBs publish on an annual basis accounts which the public can see.

(e) All appointments to NDPBs are made in accordance with guidance provided by the Cabinet Office and Her Majesty's Treasury, which requires Ministers to satisfy themselves that there is no conflict of interest.

London Orchestras

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what is his estimate of *(a)* total and *(b)* overseas earnings by the four London orchestras in the last financial year.

Mr. Brooke: The information requested is as follows:

£ million

	Total earnings	*Overseas earnings*
LPO	4·4	1·04
LSO	5·5	1·57
Philharmonia	5·1	2·27
RPO	5·3	0·95

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what is his estimate of the gearing ratio between grant aid and total income of the four London orchestras.

Mr. Brooke: The information requested is as follows: LPO—19·8 per cent.; LSO—14·4 per cent.; Philharmonia —12 per cent.; RPO—7·4 per cent.

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what public consultation was undertaken by the Arts Council before reaching its decision to fund only two London orchestras.

Mr. Brooke: The Arts Council seeks informed and objective advice in determining its policies and priorities for the various art forms. In addition, the council takes close account of consumer research and monitors box office attendance figures.

Listed Hospitals

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage which hospitals have had statutory listings changed in the last five years; if he will list the date and reason in each case; and if he will also list current applications for changes.

Mr. Sproat: This information is not readily available.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage, pursuant to his oral answer of 12 July, *Official Report,* columns 657-58, what progress has been made by the task force between his Department and the Department of Health about listed hospitals.

Mr. Sproat: I refer to the answer I gave to the hon. Member on 25 October 1993, *Official Report,* column *470.*

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what hospitals have been specifically considered by the task force between his Department and the Department of Health on listed hospitals.

Mr. Sproat: The guidance being prepared by the Department of Health and English Heritage task force will include examples of good practice from the NHS, and a number of sites have been mentioned informally in the course of discussions. Some sites where particular problems have been met have also been discussed informally. It would not be appropriate to divulge the names of these sites at this stage.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will place in the Library the reports, or summaries of reports, considered by the task force between his Department and the Department of Health on listed hospitals.

Mr. Sproat: The primary role of the Department of Health and English Heritage task force is to prepare

guidance which will assist NHS authorities to discharge their obligations for listed properties while providing health services of high quality and good value. The task force is developing the guidance from a first draft produced by English Heritage. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health will place a copy of the final guidance in the Library when it is available.

Cash Limits

Sir Donald Thompson: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what changes will be made to his Department's cash limits or running costs limits for 1993-94.

Mr. Brooke: Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimates, the following changes will be made.

(i) The cash limit for class XI, vote 3—libraries—will be increased by £202,000 from £114,337,000 to £114,539,000 to meet a new provision for the Royal National Institute for the Blind embossed literature service and to increase provision for the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts to meet new administration costs. This increase is being met by offsetting savings on class XII, vote 3 and class XVIII, vote 1.

(ii) The cash limit for class XI, vote 5—film, tourism, sport and broadcasting—will be increased by £1,022,000 from £129,086,000 to £130,108,000 to meet increased payments for broadcasting regulatory services and for lower appropriations in aid in respect of loan repayments by the Radio Authority.

(iii) The cash limit for class XI, vote 7—administration—will be increased by £40,000 from £25,294,000 to £25,334,000. This increase is the net effect of an increase of £64,000 in respect of the capital end-year flexibility scheme and a transfer of resources of £24,000 to the Department for Education in respect of certain central services provided by that department.

(iv) The Department's gross running costs control limit will, however, be decreased by £174,000 from £29,856,000 to £29,682,000 to reflect the transfer of £150,000 to a new provision on class XI, vote 7 for the Millennium Commission and £24,000 to the Department for Education.

(v) The increases wil be offset by savings and charges to the reserve, and will not, therefore, add to the planned total of public expenditure.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

European Free Trade Association

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Attorney-General what reports will be published of the proceedings and conclusions of the new EFTA Surveillance Authority; what reports it will make to the EFTA standing committee and to the Council of Ministers of the European Communities, respectively; where it will sit; and if its meetings will be open to the public.

Mr. Needham: I have been asked to reply.

The EFTA Surveillance Authority will prepare reports and assessments in line with the procedure set out in paragraph 5 of protocol 1 of the European economic area agreement. Reports will be submitted to the EEA joint committee. The EFTA Surveillance Authority will also publish information in line with the procedure set out in paragraph 6 of protocol 1. Information emanating from the EFTA Surveillance Authority will be published in a special EEA section of the *Official Journal* of the EC. In addition, article 21 of the agreement between the EFTA states on the establishment of a surveillance authority and court of justice provides that the EFTA Surveillance Authority shall annually produce a general report of its activities. This report will be available to the public. The EFTA Surveillance Authority will sit in Brussels. Its meetings will not be open to the public.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Attorney-General which publication contains the articles or rules defining the powers and procedures of the EFTA Surveillance Authority and court, respectively; by whom and when the documents were approved; what notice was given by Her Majesty's Government to any public or private body in the United Kingdom of the drafts of such articles; and what status they have in *(a)* international law or *(b)* the locus of the court of the European Community in Luxembourg.

Mr. Needham: I have been asked to reply.

Article 108 of the European economic area—EEA—agreement requires the European Free Trade Association states to establish an independent surveillance authority and a court of justice. This obligation has been fulfilled by means of a separate agreement—"Agreement on the Establishment of a Surveillance Authority and a Court of Justice"—signed by EFTA Ministers in Oporto on 2 May 1992, in parallel with the EEA agreement. The agreement has subsequently been adjusted by a protocol, to reflect Switzerland's withdrawal from the EEA, again signed only by the relevant EFTA states, in Brussels on 17 March 1993, in parallel with the protocol adjusting the EEA agreement. The agreement is between the EFTA states. Neither the Community nor any EC member state is a contracting party to the agreement. The agreement is binding on the contracting parties in international law.

ENVIRONMENT

Housing, Liverpool

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many flats have accepted the housing action trust's programme in Liverpool; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: The Liverpool housing action trust became the landlord of 5,337 properties on 4 October 1993. I am pleased that tenants and leasholders voted so overhelmingly in favour of the proposal to transfer to the Liverpool HAT. I am delighted that the HAT is now fully operational and working with tenants in this exciting initiative to improve housing conditions throughout the city.

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will state the names and positions of each person he has appointed to housing action trusts in Liverpool.

Sir George Young: The board of the Liverpool housing action trust consists of:

Mrs. P. Ridley—Chair
Mr. M. Appleton—Deputy Chair
Mr. E. McGonagle—Board Member
Mrs. S. J. Last—Board Member
Mrs. J. K. Roberts—Board Member
Mr. R. Dykes—Board Member
Councillor M. Clarke—Board Member
Mr. J. Sheridan—Tenant Board Member
Mrs. M. Gallimore—Tenant Board Member
Miss D. C. Todd—Tenant Board Member
Mrs. E. Clark—Tenant Board Member

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the salaries and expenses of members he has appointed to the housing action trust in Liverpool.

Sir George Young: HAT board members are paid at standard rates. A chairman who works for two days a week on HAT business is paid £25,315 a year: in particular busy periods where the chairman works for at least an additional day, the remuneration may be increased to £37,975. The chairman of Liverpool HAT has been paid at the higher rate in recognition of the time input she has made to the HAT. The deputy chairman is paid £8,590 a year and other board members £5,030 a year.

All board members are entitled to travel and subsistence expenses when attending the normal place at which the HAT board works, or when away on HAT business, and for other expenses necessarily incurred on HAT business. These allowances are payable in accordance with the civil service travelling and subsistence rates.

Mortgages

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement about the refusal of building societies and banks to give mortgages on ex-council homes.

Sir George Young: I am not aware of the problems on the mortgageability of most homes sold under the right to buy and voluntary sales. There is a particulr problem in relation to ex-council flats in tower blocks, where some lending institutions are currently adopting cautious policies. As the housing market picks up, the situation should improve. Meanwhile we are investigating the scale of the problem and some possible solutions, together with the lenders and the local authority associations.

Pennines Bridleway

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will now publish the proposed new route for the Pennine bridleway national trail; if he will publish a timetable for granting approval for this proposal; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: The Countryside Commission published its supplementary report and submitted it to the Secretary of State on 1 July this year, outlining revised proposals for the bridleway. I expect to announce my decision shortly.

Railfreight

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he expects the announcement of the outcome of the planning inquiry into the Railfreight depot at Hams Hall.

Mr. Baldry: The issues raised by this planning application are complex and consideration of the inspector's report has taken longer than expected. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will announce a decision shortly.

Standard Spending Assessments

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will ensure that local authorities receiving funds under the current standard spending assessment system will not be disadvantaged by phasing in any subsequent changes resulting from the review of standard spending assessments; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consideration he is giving to phasing in changes to the SSA system; and what assessment he has made of the advantages and disadvantages of doing so.

Mr. Baldry: We will consider carefully the effect of any changes in the system of standard spending assessments resulting from the review of SSAs before deciding whether it will be necessary to mitigate these effects, and if so what means and to what extent.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to establish an ongoing review of the standard spending assessment system with particular reference to the monitoring of the relationship between grant levels and needs of individual authorities.

Mr. Baldry: We have just completed a review of standard spending assessments for 1994-95. Standard spending assessments are the Government's assessment of the appropriate amount of revenue expenditure by each local authority taking account of its physical, demographic and social characteristics, consistent with the provision of a common level of service and the Government's view of the appropriate amount of revenue expenditure for all local authorities. We are always prepared to look at new evidence for changes in standard spending assessments.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what are his plans for the future relationship between capping levels and standard spending assessments.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend intends to announce provisional capping criteria for 1994-95 at the same time as his proposals for the 1994-95 local government finance settlement.

Capital Receipts

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what discussions have been held regarding the extended use of 100 per cent. capital receipts by local authorities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: The local authority associations have raised this with us in discussions. We have no plans to extend the present temporary relaxation in the rules on the use of capital receipts.

Local Government Expenditure

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consideration he will be giving in the review of the standard spending assessment system to developing an improved system for distributing Government grant or for controlling local authority expenditure.

Mr. Baldry: The review of standard spending assessments, which my right hon. Friend has discussed with the local authority associations, is now substantially complete. In the light of that review my right hon. Friend is now formulating his proposals for 1994-95 SSAs, which

he intends, as for previous years, should be a fair assessment, on the basis of the information and evidence available to him, of the appropriate amount of revenue expenditure for an authority to incur to provide a standard level of service.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to relate average grant payments and standard spending assessment levels to the relative status of local authorities for the purpose of receiving EC funding.

Mr. Baldry: None.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the effect of the area cost adjustment on *(a)* grants to local authorities in different parts of the country and *(b)* local authority pay levels.

Mr. Baldry: The area cost adjustment aims to ensure that standard spending assessments reflect regional differences in the cost of providing a standard level of service. Revenue support grant is distributed so that, if all local authorities were to spend at the level of their SSA, broadly the same level of council tax could be set in all areas for dwellings in the same valuation band. The area cost adjustment is not based on actual local authority pay levels and does not, therefore, provide any incentive for an authority to increase its pay.

Housing

Mr. Matthew Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will consider creating a system of grant allocation to help with the cost of purchasing property to provide a higher return on investor capital and to encourage long-term provision in the private rented housing sector.

Sir George Young: We are keen to explore all avenues to encourage growth in the private rented sector.

Housing Action Trusts

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing the total gross public spending for each year since 1991-92 and the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for the housing action trusts.

Sir George Young: Public expenditure on housing action trusts to date has been as follows:

	£ million
1991-92	10·1
1992-93	26·5

Current public expenditure provision for 1993-94 and the two subsequent financial years is as follows. 1992-93 prices are in brackets:

	£ million	*£ million*
1993-94	86·8	(84·5)
1994-95	88·2	(82·4)
1995-96	90·0	(81·0)

Public Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Gummer: The Department and its sponsored bodies attracted over £2 billion of private investment in support of departmental programmes in 1992-93, and similarly expects to lever in up to £3 billion of private funding in 1993-94. This will assist the implementation of a wide variety of projects, most notably in housing, inner cities and urban regeneration. It is not practicable to list each project.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing for each of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department, whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests.

Mr. Gummer: All the NDPBs' annual accounts, and in most cases their annual reports, are statutory documents which are published. In most cases they are also laid before Parliament.

Local Government, Isle of Wight

Mr. Barry Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the future of local government and the unitary authority proposals for the Isle of Wight.

Mr. Gummer: I have today written to Sir John Banham, chairman of the Local Government Commission, giving my decision on the commission's report "Final Recommendations on the Future Local Government of the Isle of Wight".

After considering the commission's recommendations for the island and the representations made, I have concluded that effective and convenient local government on the Isle of Wight would be best achieved by establishing a unitary authority for the whole island—Commission recommendation 1—and that this would best meet the identities and interests of the local people. The single-tier Isle of Wight council will be up and running by 1 April 1995.

All the other commission recommendations have been accepted as submitted with the exception of that for planning—recommendation 3—which I propose to modify. I believe that the planning needs on the island would be better served if the unitary authority were to prepare a unitary development plan rather than to continue with a two-tier planning system. The draft order for the Isle of Wight reorganisation will therefore state that, for the purposes of part II of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the initary island authority should be treated as an authority to whose area chapter I—unitary plans—of this part of the Act applies, rather than chapter II.

It is intended that the existing district councils on the Isle of Wight will cease to exist as of 1 April 1995.

There will be elections to the unitary authority held in May 1995. In order that there is adequate provision for planning the smooth transition to the new structure I intend to give the present county councillors, in consultation with the present district councillors, the necessary powers to plan for change.

Planning for the new unitary authority will be undertaken by existing county councillors who will consult and involve South Wight and Medina councils.

An order giving effect to the commission's recommendations, with the planning modification, will be laid before the House in due course. A copy of my letter to Sir John Banham has been placed in the Library.

Local Government Commission

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will issue revised guidelines to the Local Government Commission.

Mr. Curry: I have today issued revised policy guidance to the commission, incorporating the changes outlined in my right hon. Friend's announcement of 30 September and taking account of the comments we received on our draft proposals. We are re-emphasising the benefits of unitary authorities and asking the commission to give more weight to proposals emerging as a result of local consensus. A copy of the document has been placed in the Library of the House and additional copies are available in the Vote Office.

I hope that, by removing any doubt about the Government's views on a number of issues, the revised guidance will assist the commission in its important task of recommending arrangements which best combine a reflection of the identities and interests of local people with the need to secure convenient and effective local government.

We are still discussing with the Local Government Commission the details of the accelerated review programme.

Mr. Patrick Doyle

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a list of all meetings held and correspondence exchanged in the past 10 years between his Department and Mr. Patrick Doyle, now of AST Training; what was the nature of such meetings or correspondence; what plans he has to meet Mr. Patrick Doyle; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gummer *[holding answer 22 October 1993]:* My Department has traced only two contacts with companies associated with Mr. Patrick Doyle. The first was when the Queen Elizabeth II conference centre contracted Home Counties Cleaning on an ad hoc basis for the period 2 June to 18 August 1986. The second was when the Deptford task force let a contract for two plastering skills training courses from February 1991 to September 1992. I have no plans to meet Mr. Doyle.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Agricultural Wages Board

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many inspectors are currently employed by the Agricultural Wages Board; and how many were employed 10 years ago.

Mr. Jack: Agricultural minimum wage enforcement is the responsibility of the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Staff undertake wages inspection as one of a range of duties and the time spent on this activity will vary considerably from officer to officer. Total time spent by the Ministry on minimum wage enforcement is therefore the best measure when comparing one year with another. The earliest figures available relate to 1987-88 and show a total input of around 19 staff years. In 1992-93 the comparable figure was also some 19 staff years.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many visits have been carried out during the last 12 months by Agricultural Wages Board inspectors; and how many were carried out 10 years ago.

Mr. Jack: Agricultural wages inspections are carried out by officers appointed by the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and by the Secretary of State for Wales. During 1992, the latest full year for which figures are available, 554 holdings were visited as part of the programme of test inspections or in the process of following up specific complaints. In 1982, 2,979 holdings were visited. However, this 1982 figure includes visits to collect statistical information for the wages and employment inquiry. This statistical information is now collected by post and, as a result, the 1992 and 1982 figures are not directly comparable.

Hill Livestock Compensatory Allowances

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what percentage of eligible farmers had received their hill livestock compensatory allowances for 1993 by 31 October.

Mr. Jack: At the end of October, the total number of hill livestock compensatory allowance claims received in the United Kingdom under the 1993 scheme was 64,557. Of these 62,981 have been processed for payment. This represents 97·5 per cent. of the claims received.

Fisheries Conservation

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what representations she has received on future conservation measures for fish stocks in the Irish sea; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack: We have received a report from the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations setting out its proposed alternatives to days at sea restrictions including proposals for the Irish sea. We are considering the report urgently and hope to make an announcement shortly.

Mr. Hicks: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food when he intends responding to the proposals by the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations for alternative conservation measures to the proposal by the Government to limit the days at sea that fishermen may fish; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Jack: I hope to make an announcement shortly.

Sheep and Cattle Farms

Dr. Strang: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the net farm income for mainly sheep and sheep and cattle farms in severely disadvantaged areas in England and Wales, in both nominal and real terms for each year since 1978.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard *[pursuant to her reply, 29 October 1993, c. 798]:* Estimates of net farm income, based on results of sample surveys are provided in the tables. The method of farm classification has been changed and results for 1992-93 and subsequent years will only be available on the revised method. In order to ensure a consistent data series the results for years from 1986-87 have been reanalysed and these are presented for SDA specialist sheep farms and SDA mixed cattle and sheep farms in table 1, for England, and table 2, for Wales. Tables 3 and 4 provide data on the previous method of classification for the years 1978-79 to 1991-92 for SDA sheep farms and SDA cattle and sheep farms.

Year-to-year comparisons can best be made by reference to the indices shown in the tables, which are based on results from constant samples of farms.

Forecasts of incomes will be placed in the Library of the House on 30 November when the outcome of the autumn review of hill livestock compensatory allowances is announced.

Table 1

Average net farm income on livestock farms wholly or partly in the Severely Disadvantaged Area in England (New Classification)

Year[1]	Specialist sheep farms				Mixed cattle and sheep farms			
	£'000 per farm		Indices[2]		£'000 per farm		Indices[2]	
	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]
1986-87	7·8	10·6	115	147	8·8	12·0	83	106
1987-88	8·0	10·5	118	146	12·6	16·5	118	145
1988-89	11·7	14·5	139	162	16·1	20·0	150	175
1989-90	7·7	8·9	103	111	12·1	13·9	106	114
1990-91	6·7	7·0	86	85	8·4	8·8	75	74
1991-92	10·7	10·7	111	104	13·2	13·2	119	112
1992-93[4]	14·8	14·3	157	142	16·5	16·0	177	161

Table 2

Average net farm income on livestock farms wholly or partly in the Severely Disadvantaged Area in Wales (New Classification)

Year[1]	Specialist sheep farms				Mixed cattle and sheep farms			
	£'000 per farm		Indices[2]		£'000 per farm		Indices[2]	
	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]
1986-87	8·3	11·3	141	181	7·9	10·8	98	125
1987-88	6·9	9·1	117	145	11·6	15·2	143	175
1988-89	10·9	13·5	167	196	14·1	17·5	170	197
1989-90	5·8	6·7	92	100	10·4	12·0	113	121
1990-91	8·1	8·5	85	84	8·3	8·7	84	82
1991-92	12·4	12·4	123	116	12·2	12·2	104	97
1992-93[4]	16·2	15·7	191	174	16·3	15·8	141	128

Table 3

Average net farm income on livestock farms wholly or partly in the Severely Disadvantaged Area in England (Old Classification)

Year[1]	Mainly sheep farms				Cattle and sheep farms			
	£'000 per farm		Indices[2]		£'000 per farm		Indices[2]	
	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]
1978-79[5]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8·8	23·3	119	245
1979-80[5]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4·2	9·7	54	96
1980-81[5]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6·1	12·0	76	140
1981-82[5]	11·1	19·6	100	167	9·4	16·6	139	230
1982-83[5]	8·1	13·3	84	131	9·2	15·1	125	193
1983-84	10·8	16·9	87	129	7·8	12·2	106	155
1984-85	9·4	14·0	79	111	9·6	14·3	119	167
1985-86	11·9	16·7	102	135	10·1	14·2	120	158
1986-87	9·1	12·4	89	115	8·0	10·9	95	122
1987-88	9·9	13·0	102	126	11·8	15·5	129	158
1988-89	12·7	15·8	136	159	15·6	19·4	161	187
1989-90	7·5	8·6	92	100	10·6	12·2	111	119
1990-91	7·7	8·1	79	78	7·2	7·6	72	71
1991-92	10·9	10·9	129	122	12·4	12·4	117	110

Table 4

Average net farm income on livestock farms wholly or partly in the Severely Disadvantaged Area in Wales (Old Classification)

Year[1]	Mainly sheep farms				Cattle and sheep farms			
	£'000 per farm		Indices[2]		£'000 per farm		Indices[2]	
	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]	Current prices	1991-92 prices[3]	Current prices	Real Terms[3]
1978-79[5]	6·9	18·1	76	189	7·4	19·4	73	181
1979-80[5]	2·9	6·7	32	69	4·1	9·5	40	89
1980-81[5]	5·9	11·5	68	124	6·2	12·2	58	107
1981-82[5]	8·8	15·5	95	157	7·8	13·6	103	171
1982-83[5]	6·2	10·2	73	113	6·7	11·1	86	134
1983-84	8·6	13·4	97	142	6·6	10·4	80	119
1984-85	9·7	14·5	147	206	7·7	11·4	83	117
1985-86	7·9	11·2	101	133	8·4	11·8	96	129
1986-87	9·8	13·4	112	144	9·3	12·8	98	127
1987-88	9·4	12·3	105	130	12·5	16·4	119	149
1988-89	8·3	10·4	149	175	8·5	10·6	154	181
1989-90	9·5	10·9	99	107	10·9	12·5	94	102
1990-91	10·8	11·4	89	88	8·7	9·1	72	71
1991-92	16·8	16·5	112	105	13·7	13·5	134	126

Notes:
[1] Accounting years end on average in February.
[2] 1989-90—1991-92=100.
[3] The information has been derived by deflating the current price estimates by the retail prices index.
[4] Provisional figure at the time of the 1993 autumn review of the economic conditions in the hills and uplands.
[5] The estimates for these years are not strictly comparable with those for later years.

Surplus Food Scheme

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what type and quantities of food she expects to be available for distribution via the EC surplus food scheme in 1993-94.

Mr. Jack: I announced on 26 July that 6,200 tonnes of beef will be released under the scheme from intervention stocks to be canned for allocation to designated organisations and that further quantities may be made available later. I am pleased to announce that the Commission has approved the release of an additional 6,000 tonnes of beef for distribution in the United Kingdom during 1993-94. In previous years, butter has also been distributed, but successful reductions of intervention stocks have meant that butter cannot now be made available under the scheme. I will be announcing the arrangements for the distribution of beef shortly.

WALES

School Pupils

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, columns *54-56*, on the placing of full-time pupils aged five to 15 years, when he expects to publish the relevant information for January 1993.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is given in the tables.

(a) The number of full-time pupils aged 5-15 years[1]

Maintained primary and secondary schools[2]

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Clwyd	54,407	53,737	52,992	52,993	53,043	53,431
Dyfed	45,254	45,727	45,597	45,652	45,754	45,805
Gwent	59,960	59,142	59,008	59,438	60,149	61,279
Gwynedd	31,663	31,047	30,496	29,956	29,782	29,844
Mid Glamorgan	76,143	75,244	75,054	75,214	75,615	76,795
Powys	15,574	15,498	15,467	15,331	15,335	15,454
South Glamorgan	52,131	52,128	52,038	52,730	53,703	54,837
West Glamorgan	48,584	48,505	48,350	48,769	49,002	49,570
Wales	383,715	381,028	379,002	380,083	382,383	387,015

[1] At January each year, with ages at 31 August the preceding year.
[2] Includes grant-maintained schools.

LEA maintained special schools

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Clwyd	661	634	629	630	642	662
Dyfed	258	254	232	199	210	181
Gwent	351	336	316	320	307	299
Gwynedd	263	255	215	211	234	235
Mid Glamorgan	646	587	589	565	597	648
Powys	110	109	122	122	125	113
South Glamorgan	655	624	588	575	537	527
West Glamorgan	218	194	181	177	175	170

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Wales	3,162	2,993	2,872	2,799	2,827	2,835

(b) The number of children aged 5-15 belonging to:

(i) other LEAs but attending special schools maintained by the LEA

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Clwyd	30	25	38	37	42	43
Dyfed	11	12	13	2	3	3
Gwent	14	16	11	6	4	0
Gwynedd	15	18	15	11	8	7
Mid Glamorgan	32	29	23	16	19	11
Powys	4	7	5	4	3	3
South Glamorgan	81	73	58	48	36	38
West Glamorgan	5	7	11	12	11	9

(ii) the LEA but attending special schools maintained by other LEAs

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Clwyd	33	29	25	24	24	22
Dyfed	15	15	17	16	13	14
Gwent	48	45	38	24	26	22
Gwynedd	15	8	10	8	7	15
Mid Glamorgan	48	42	37	31	19	17
Powys	7	7	2	3	3	1
South Glamorgan	17	17	13	5	3	3
West Glamorgan	12	16	8	11	12	7

(iii) the LEA but attending non-maintained special and independent schools[1]

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Clwyd	3	2	4	2	8	5
Dyfed	10	16	8	12	21	21
Gwent	36	45	56	69	32	41
Gwynedd	8	8	7	8	6	7
Mid Glamorgan	52	53	58	61	51	37
Powys	14	22	18	20	18	18
South Glamorgan	6	9	7	9	5	5
West Glamorgan	17	15	9	12	2	2

[1] Data for 1988-1991 include children of all ages. Data for 1992 and 1993 include children aged 5-16 years with statements of special educational needs only. Data include children being educated outside of the authority in which they are registered.

Private Capital

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Redwood: Private finance forms a significant part of many Welsh Office programmes. The total for 1993-94 is estimated to be £278 million. Details of projects commenced since November 1992 are not readily available. Examples of projects currently in hand or in prospect include:

Croesfoel flyover on A483 (design and build).
New community development, Cefn yr Hendy, near Llantrisant.
Patient hotel, Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend.
Multi-storey car park, UHW Cardiff.
Microwave incinerator—Pembrokeshire NHS Trust.
Redevelopment at Brynhyfryd Estate, Llangennech.
NCM Credit Insurance Offices, Cardiff Bay.

Education Funding

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish a table showing the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for (i) the Further Education Funding Council for Wales, (ii) the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and (iii) the Schools Funding Council for Wales.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Provision for the financial year 1993-94 and planning figures for the financial years 1994-95 and 1995-96 were notified to the Further and Higher Education Funding Councils for Wales in December 1992 and January 1993 respectively. The details are as follows:

£ million

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Further Education Funding Council for Wales	143·260	160·924	168·436
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales	178·975	189·958	193·013

These figures are in cash. At 1992-93 prices the values are as follows:

£ million

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Further Education Funding Council for Wales	139·426	150·396	152·087
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales	174·185	177·531	174·278

Provision for 1994-95 will be determined following decisions taken in this year's public expenditure settlement and the planning figure for 1995-96 will be revised as necessary in the light of those decisions.

No decision has been taken to establish a schools funding council for Wales.

NATIONAL FINANCE

EC Budget Discipline

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in agreeing a new inter-institutional agreement on budget discipline with the European Parliament.

Sir John Cope: The Edinburgh European Council of 11-12 December 1992 concluded:

"the Inter-Institutional Agreement (IIA) for 1988-1992 was a positive development and hopes that the agreement can be re-established on terms ensuring strict budgetary discipline and a smooth passage of the annual budgetary discussions. . . . It calls upon the Council . . . subject to acceptable terms being attainable, to reach agreement with the Commission and European Parliament on a revised IIA."

Since Edinburgh, discussions have taken place between the Council—represented by the presidency—the Commission and the European Parliament with a view to fulfilling the Edinburgh mandate. These discussions were difficult at times. However, the Belgian presidency has recently succeeded in negotiating a satisfactory agreement. This was endorsed by the Council at the Foreign Affairs Council on 4 October—*Official Report*, 19 October 1993, columns *206-7*—and the informal meeting of ECOFIN on 9 October—*Official Report*, 18 October, column *15*—and by the European Parliament at its plenary session on 27 October. The agreement was signed at the recent Special Foreign Affairs Council. A copy of the text has been placed in the Library.

The IIA is a political, but not legally binding, agreement which clarifies the Community's budgetary procedure. Under the treaty, the Council and the European Parliament have joint responsibility for deciding the Community budget on the basis of proposals from the Commission. The IIA sets out the way the three institutions will exercise their responsibilities in accordance with the treaty, and respecting the revenue ceilings which are laid down in the own resources decision. In particular, it provides for the annual Community budget to be set in the context of a multi-annual financial framework. This allows a more orderly development of spending priorities than would be possible if the budget were agreed one year at a time without reference to a longer-term plan.

Offshore Trusts

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list those cases brought before the courts by the Commissioners for the Inland Revenue in relation to offshore trusts between 1985 and 1992.

Mr. Dorrell: The cases were as follows: (in re Clore No. 3) Commissioners of the Inland Revenue and Stype Investments—1985 STC 394, Minden Trust (Caymen) Ltd. and Commissioners of the Inland Revenue—1985 STC 758, Commissioners of the Inland Revenue and Brackett—1986 STC 521, Dawson and Commissioners of the Inland Revenue—1989 STC 473, Montagues Trust Company (Jersey) Ltd. and Commissioners of the Inland Revenue—1989 STC 477, Jones and Lincoln-Lewis—1991 STC 307, and Marshall and Kerr—1991 STC 686).

All references are to Simons tax cases.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list those occasions between October 1992 and October 1993 on which he formally communicated concerning the externally held sterling balances with *(a)* committees of the Commonwealth, *(b)* the division of the International Monetary Fund dealing with offshore balances and *(c)* the World bank division dealing with offshore currency holdings.

Mr. Nelson: I have made no such communication.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his policy with regard to institutions and bodies which advertise and offer advice on offshore tax avoidance and who bid for Government business; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Dorrell: Government Departments seek to ensure that there are no matters which would make it inappropriate for them to have business dealing with particular firms.

The provision by such a firm of tax planning advice, the adoption of which would be within the confines of tax law, would not in general be regarded as such a matter.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what specific steps the Inland Revenue has taken to investigate untaxed payments from abroad to unincorporated bodies in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Dorrell: Where appropriate, the Inland Revenue makes inquiries, using its powers to gather relevant information, in order to investigate payment from abroad to unincorporated bodies.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library those reports he has had from the European Commission relating to offshore funds since 1 January 1991; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Dorrell: So for as I am aware, no such reports have been published.

Capital Gains Tax

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what studies he has made into the impact on United Kingdom domiciled companies of the capital gains-free regime available to investors from abroad when they make capital disposals; and if he will place such studies in the Library;

(2) what studies he has made into the effect on United Kingdom industrial domestic capital investment of repatriated tax-free offshore capital gains; and if he will place any such studies in the Library.

Mr. Dorrell: We have made no such studies.

Income Tax

Mr. Betts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the reliefs and exemptions on income tax; and what will be the cost of each to the Exchequer *(a)* in 1993-94 and *(b)* in 1994-95.

Mr. Dorrell: Estimates of the cost of income tax reliefs and exemptions for 1993-94 are available in table 9 of the "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs" booklet published by HM Treasury in July. Estimates for 1994-95 will be published next summer.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer given to the hon. Member for Wallasay (Ms Eagle) 16 July, *Official Report*, column *700*, giving estimates for 1994-95 and for a full year.

Mr. Dorrell: Latest available estimates from the 1991-92 survey of personal incomes projected to 1994-95 are given in the following table. For 1994-95 it was announced in the March Budget that from 6 April 1994 mortgage interest relief and the married couple's and related allowances would be restricted to 20 per cent. and so these effects are incorporated into the base and excluded from the table. No account has been taken of possible behavioural changes resulting from the restrictions and figures for the major allowances and reliefs show the yield from restricting each allowance or relief separately. If two or more were restricted the total yield would be greater than the sum of figures for individual allowances. It is not possible to provide estimates of the first-year effects as the yield would depend on the administrative arrangements which implemented the changes.

£ million

	Estimated full-year yield of restriction to basic rate	*20 per cent.*
All allowances and reliefs	2,420	7,350
Personal allowance (excluding age-related addition)	1,420	5,500
Age-related personal allowance[1]	0	120
Pension contribution reliefs[2]	620	1,230

[1] The higher level of age-related personal allowance given to those aged 65 and over, subject to the income limit.
[2] Employees' contributions to occupational pension schemes and contributions to personal pensions including retirement annuity premia and free-standing additional voluntary contributions.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer to the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East (Mr. Brown) 11 January, *Official Report*, column *546*, giving estimates for 1994-95, and including estimates of the effects of widening the 20 per cent. band of tax.

Mr. Dorrell: The effects of the various changes to income tax and child benefit on a married man with two children are shown in the table. Each of the changes would cost £1·8 billion a year; that is the cost in a full year of a 1p cut in the basic rate of income tax. Estimates are based on projections of the 1991-92 survey of personal incomes.

Increase in income after tax[1] (£ per week) compared with indexation[2] in 1994-95 for a married man[3] with two children

	Multiple of average earnings[4]						
	½	*¾*	*1*	*1½*	*2*	*5*	*10*
Increase derived from							
(i) 1p cut in basic rate	0·63	1·57	2·51	4·08	4·08	4·08	4·08
(ii) 8·8 per cent. increase in personal allowance	1·62	1·62	1·62	2·31	2·31	2·31	2·31
(iii) increase in child benefit							
(a) £3·75 per week per child[5]	7·50	7·50	7·50	7·50	7·50	7·50	7·50
(b) £2·55 per week per child[6]	5·10	5·10	5·10	5·10	5·10	5·10	5·10
(iv) £1,900 increase in width of 20 per cent. band	2·29	2·29	2·29	2·29	2·29	2·29	2·29

[1] Disregarding any change to entitlement to social security income—related benefits except in item (iii)b.
[2] Calculations based on the standard assumption that 1993-94 allowances and the basic rate limit have been indexed by 1·8 per cent. with the lower rate band increased to £3,000 as announced in March 1993.
[3] Assumed to have no tax reliefs and allowances other than the personal allowance and the married couple's allowance.
[4] Average earnings assumed to be £376·10 per week.
[5] Assuming no change in income support and family credit children's rates.
[6] Assuming corresponding changes in income support and family credit children's rates.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much tax for 1992 has been remitted or written off as irrecoverable; and how much of this is PAYE contributions.

Mr. Dorrell: The amount of tax that has been remitted or written off as irrecoverable for 1992 is as follows:

Year	*Amount in thousands*
1992	1,694,246

The amount of this that relates to PAYE contributions is as follows:

Year	*Amount in thousands*
1992	381,172

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer of 25 February, *Official Report*, column 682 on the tax liabilities of taxpayers in different income bands, giving figures for 1993-94 and estimates for 1994-95 based on the assumption of statutory indexation and including measures already announced in the 1993 Budget.

Mr. Dorrell: Latest estimates of the average reductions in income tax and national insurance contribution liabilities in 1993-94 and in 1994-95, assuming statutory indexation and inclusion of measures already announced,

compared with liabilities under an indexed 1987-88 regime are in the table. An equivalent assumption has been made about indexation of the national insurance regime for 1994-95. The 1987-88 income tax regime has been indexed to 1993-94 and 1994-95 by reference to the statutory formula and allowing for independent taxation.

Range of individual's income in 1993-94 or 1994-95 £	*Average reduction in 1993-94 compared with 1987-88 indexed regime*		*Average reduction or increase (−) in 1994-95 compared with 1987-88 indexed regime*	
	Income tax £	*Income tax and national insurance* £	*Income tax* £	*Income tax and national insurance* £
Under 5,000	60	70	60	70
5,000-10,000	170	240	180	220
10,000-15,000	260	400	230	290
15,000-20,000	340	480	270	290
20,000-25,000	420	540	330	300
25,000-30,000	490	600	370	310
30,000-40,000	300	400	30	−40
40,000-50,000	590	680	240	170
50,000-70,000	1,970	2,050	1,540	1,460
70,000-80,000	4,740	4,810	4,100	4,020
over 80,000	19,500	19,600	19,100	19,000
Average	420	500	370	390

For the purpose of the calculations the indexed regime of 1987-88 has been applied directly to the income bases of 1993-94 and 1994-95. In practice, retention of the 1987-88 regime, indexed as appropriate, for the intervening years would have led to changes in the income base.

Economic and Financial Councils

Ms Quin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the outcome of the EC Economic and Finance Council held on 25 October.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: The European Community Economic and Finance Council—ECOFIN—met in Luxembourg on 25 October. I represented the United Kingdom.

Political agreement was reached on proposed secondary legislation designed to ensure that certain treaty provisions relating to stage II of European monetary union are consistently applied. I made clear that the proposed legislation was still under consideration by our scrutiny committees. Subject to that, final adoption of the proposed legislation is conditional on the entry into force of the Maastricht treaty and the opinion of the European Parliament. The Council looked favourably on the candidacy of Alexandre Lamfalussy, the outgoing managing director of the Bank of International Settlements in Basle, for the position as first president of the EMI.

The Commission circulated a report on progress made on the growth initiative since the Edinburgh declaration in December last year. All member states indicated their intention to complete the remaining procedures to establish the European investment fund by the end of the year. The Council also indicated broad support on widening the scope of the temporary EIB lending facility established by the Edinburgh European Council. I continued to stress the themes in the United Kingdom contribution to the Commission's White Book. A copy of the United Kingdom's contribution is available in the House Library.

The Council had its first discussion of a proposal to amend the scope of the UCITS—undertakings for collective investments in transferable securities—directive which sets minimum standards for the regulation of certain collective investment schemes. The Council agreed that work should continue in the light of the forthcoming opinion of the European Parliament and a study by the Commission of the macro-economic impact of the proposal.

The Council discussed a proposal for an EC-wide withholding tax on interest from savings, directed at the distortions some other member states believe arise as a result of the differing systems in the Community for the taxation of interest. With support from some other member states, I made clear the Government's doubts about the need or likely effectiveness of a Community-wide approach. The presidency decided to remit the dossier back to the working group.

The Council adopted a directive on road haulage, tolls and user charges implementing the political agreement on these matters which was reached by the Transport Council in September. There was also final political agreement on the increase in travellers' allowances provisionally agreed during the United Kingdom presidency in November 1992. The tax free allowances will rise from 45 to 175 ecu for travellers from third countries and from 45 to 90 ecu for intra-Community travel. The agreement will be reviewed in 1995 and includes a derogation covering the eastern borders of Germany lasting until 1997. The Council also adopted an important regulation liberalising road haulage cabotage at the same time.

The Commission presented a report on the functioning of the indirect tax system in the single market in its first six months and applauded the efforts of national administrations in introducing the new systems.

The Council also noted the recent Commission proposal —8994-93—about changing the way in which annual surpluses and deficits are treated in the EC budget to produce a more regular cash flow. It was clear that the proposal was unacceptable to many member states. However, the Council agreed to look at alternative ways of attaining the same end, subject to respecting fully the annual ceiling on own resources.

There were no formal votes. The decisions on the road transport liberalisation legislation were taken by consensus.

Business Expansion Scheme

Mr. Matthew Banks: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what contribution the business expansion scheme has made to encouraging investment in the private rental sector;

(2) what steps are being taken to encourage long-term ownership of rented property following the abolition of the business expansion scheme on 31 December.

Mr. Dorrell: The business expansion scheme was extended in 1988 for a limiting period for qualifying investment in private rented housing companies to stimulate investors' interest in a sector which has received little encouragement for many years. By the end of 1992-93, the BES had attracted some £2·1 billion for housing companies, and it is estimated that some 40,000 units of rented accommodation have been provided as a result. Any proposal for future tax policy are a matter for the Budget to be presented on 30 November.

Private Investment Projects

Ms Harman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Dorrell: The Treasury does not undertake or sponsor the sorts of large public investment projects with which private capital is generally associated. It has, however, used leasing for office equipment. The Treasury will explore the scope for further use of private finance where this can be justified on value for money grounds. Such opportunities will be evaluated on the basis of the published Treasury guidance on private finance.

Executive Share Option Scheme

Ms Harman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the economic effects of continuing tax relief on executive share options since the March 1993 Budget; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Dorrell: Tax relief for approved executive share option schemes is intended to help companies to attract, retain and motivate key executives. A report on employee share schemes by KPMG Management Consulting was published in 1991; and the relief is kept under regular review.

Ms Harman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish the most recent estimate he has made of the cost to the Exchequer of tax relief on executive share option schemes in 1992-93 and 1993-94.

Mr. Dorrell: Provisional estimates are as follows:

£ million

	1992-93	*1993-94*
Approved discretionary share option schemes	45	55

European Community

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what esimate he has made of the United Kingdom's net contribution to the European Community over the next three financial years.

Sir John Cope: A forecast of the United Kingdom's net contribution to EC institutions, for the years to 1995-96, was given in table 11.1 of the Chancellor's departmental report—Cm 2217—published in February 1993. A revised forecast, covering the years to 1996-97, will be published in the "Financial Statement and Budget Report" on 30 November.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the United Kingdom's net contribution to the EC in 1992-93; by what amount this is different from the estimates made prior to April 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: The estimated outturn for the United Kingdom's net contribution to the European Community in 1992-93 is £1,810 million, £653 million lower than the forecast given in table 68 of the Chancellor's departmental report in February 1992—Cm 1918. The main reasons for a lower level of net payments than originally forecast were higher structural fund receipts than had been forecast and lower gross contributions, mainly as a consequence of a lower UK share of gross contributions resulting from adjustments to the VAT and fourth resources paid in December 1992 and lower agricultural and sugar levies and customs duties.

Mortgage Tax Relief

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update his answer to the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North (Mr. Dafis) of 12 July, *Official Report*, columns *367-68*, to include estimates for 1994-95 based upon changes already announced in the 1993 Budget and assuming indexation otherwise.

Mr. Dorrell: The estimates for 1994-95 are shown in the table. The figures are based on the conventional assumption of no further changes in interest rates.

Mortgage interest relief by range of total income[1]*:*

Numbers 000's

Range of total income[1] *(lower limit)* £	*Number of single people or married couples benefiting from mortgage interest relief Thousands*	*Average mortgage interest relief* £	*Cost of mortgage interest relief £ million*
0	840	300	250
5,000	1,050	270	280
10,000	2,080	320	670
15,000	2,260	360	810
20,000	1,360	380	510
25,000	910	400	360
30,000	800	400	330
40,000	700	420	290
Total	10,000	350	3,500

[1] Total income of husband for married couples.

Child Care

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the effect on revenues in 1994-95 and in a full year of extending the income tax exemption for workplace nurseries as a benefit in kind to *(a)* child care cheques and vouchers and *(b)* other employer assistance into child care; and what the effects would be if the relief were limited to the basic rate.

Mr. Dorrell: Exempting all forms of existing employer assistance for child care would have a revenue cost at 1993-94 levels of provision and subsidies of approximately £5 million. There is insufficient information to sub-divide this estimate. If such a measure were introduced there would be substantial behavioural effects.

Invalidity Benefit

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer of 9 March, *Official Report*, columns *507-8*, giving estimates for 1994-95 and for a full year.

Mr. Dorrell: Estimates for 1994-95 will depend on the levels of invalidity benefit and on tax rates and allowances for that year. The latest estimates for 1993-94 were given in reply to the hon. Member on 21 June 1993, at column *12*.

Corporation Tax

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) of 25 June, *Official Report*, column *328*, what was the corporation tax liability of the 25 largest profitable United Kingdom groups in 1992 both in cash and constant 1987 prices.

Mr. Dorrell: I regret that the information requested is not available. The tax assessments currently available are an insufficient basis on which to produce reliable estimates.

Banking Systems

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what were the level of United Kingdom liabilities, for sterling and for foreign currencies, and the level of United Kingdom claims, for sterling and foreign currencies, with the banking systems of *(a)* the British Virgin islands, *(b)* the Cayman islands, *(c)* Guernsey, *(d)* the Isle of Man and *(e)* Jersey at 30 June.

Mr. Nelson: The information is not available in the form requested.

BT Share Offer

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what were the administrative costs of the third BT share offer; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Dorrell: The costs of to the Government, during the financial years 1992-93 and 1993-94, of the third BT share offer are estimated to be as follows:

	£ million
Advisers' fees and expenses	4·7
Share Information Office	10·5
Marketing	16·1
Receiving and Agent Bank operations	18·5
International Tender Offer and Share Shop Commissions	44·5
Overseas Offers	0·9
Total	95·2

These costs represent about 1·8 per cent. of the total proceeds due from the sale of shares to the Government, which are estimated at £5,333 million. The costs exclude stamp duty and VAT on services provided to the Government, which are not net costs to the Exchequer.

Tax Ready Reckoner

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the information provided in the Treasury's "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs" on the basis of the September retail prices index.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* Updated information for tables 2 to 6 is as follows.

Figures for tables 7 to 9 have not been revised as these are not dependent on the September retail prices index.

Table 2—Income Tax

	1993-94 £	*1994-95* £
Personal allowance	3,445	3,515
Personal allowance aged (age 65-74)	4,200	4,280
Personal allowance (age 75 and over)	4,370	4,450
Married couple's allowance	1,720	1,760
Married couple's allowance (age 65-74)	2,465	[1]2,715
Married couple's allowance (age 75 and over)	2,505	[1]2,755
Additional personal[2] and widow's bereavement allowance	1,720	1,760
Aged income limit[3]	14,200	14,500
Lower rate band	2,500	[4]3,000
Basic rate limit[5]	23,700	24,200

[1] Includes the extra £200 proposed in the March Budget to ensure that basic rate taxpayers aged 65 and over lose no more from the restriction of the married couple's allowance to 20 per cent. than basic rate taxpayers under 65.

[2] Primarily for single parents.

[3] If the total income, less allowable deductions, of a taxpayer aged 65 or over exceeds this limit, the age-related allowances are reduced by £1 for each £2 of income over the limit until the basic levels of the personal and married couple's allowances are reached.

[4] This is the level proposed in the March Budget. If the band for 1993-94 were indexed, the 1994-95 band would be £2,600.

[5] Higher rate income tax is payable on income—less those allowances and reliefs that are allowed at the higher rate—in excess of the basic rate limit.

Table 3—Inheritance tax

£'000

	1993-94	*1994-95*
Threshold	150	153

Table 4—Capital gains tax

£

	1993-94	*1994-95*
Annual exempt amount:		
Individuals	5,800	6,000
Trustees	2,900	3,000

Table 5—Costs of indexation for 1994-95

£ million

	1994-95	*1995-96*
Indexation of income tax allowances and basic rate limit[1]	580	790
Of which:		
Increases in allowances	450	600
Increase in the basic rate limit[2]	130	190
Indexation of inheritance tax threshold	10	20
Indexation of capital gains annual exempt amount	—	5

[1] Cost includes the consequential effects on capital gains tax, but excludes the cost of the increase in the lower rate band from £2,500 to £3,000, and of the £200 increase in the married couple's allowance for taxpayers aged 65 or over, proposed in the March 1993 Budget.
[2] Additional cost after previous change has been introduced.

Table 6—Direct effects of illustrative changes in direct taxes[1]

	£ million cost/yield	
	1994-95	*1995-96*
INCOME TAX[2]		
Rates		
Change lower rate by 1p[3]	390	220
Change basic rate by 1p	1,600	1,900
Change higher rate by 1p	270	440
Allowances		
Change personal allowance by £100	470	600
Change age-related personal allowances by £100[4]	45	60
Change married couple's allowance by £100[5]	140	190
Change age-related married couple's allowance by £100[4]	12	16
Change aged income limit by £500	5	9
Change all personal allowances by 1 per cent.[6]	170	230
Change all personal allowances by 10 per cent.[6]	1,700	2,250
Change married couple's and related allowances by 1 per cent.[6]	25	35
Change married couple's and related allowances by 10 per cent.[6]	280	360
Lower rate band		
Increase lower rate band by 10 per cent.[6]	240	310
Basic rate limit		
Change basic rate limit by 1 per cent.[6]	55	80
Change basic rate limit by 10 per cent.[6]:		
increase (cost)	500	720
decrease (yield)	630	890
Allowances, lower rate band and basic rate limit		
Change all main allowances, lower rate band and basic rate limit by 1 per cent.[6]	290	380
Change all main allowances, lower rate band and basic rate limit by 10 per cent.[6]:		
increase (cost)	2,800	3,650
decrease (yield)	3,050	4,000
CORPORATION TAX[7]		
Change full rate by 1 percentage point	390	630
Change small companies' rate by 1 percentage point[8]	70	110
CAPITAL GAINS TAX[9]		
Change annual exempt amount by £500 for individuals and £250 for trustees	0	6
INHERITANCE TAX[9]		
Change rate by 1 percentage point	14	31
Increase threshold by £5,000	14	29

[1] The estimated revenue effects of the changes on receipts are rounded. The extent of rounding reflects the desire to avoid undue compounding of its effects when numbers are pro-rated, rather than the accuracy of the estimates.
[2] The figures for income tax changes include consequential effects on the yield of capital gains tax. Changes are assumed to take effect from April 1994.
[3] Including the effects of the change on receipts of advance corporation tax and on consequent liability to mainstream corporation tax.
[4] Allowances for those aged 65-74 and aged 75 and over.
[5] Figures include revenue effects of changing the additional personal allowance and the widow's bereavement allowances by £100.
[6] Percentage changes are calculated with reference to 1993-94 levels.
[7] Assessment to corporation tax normally relates to the preceding year. These estimates are the changes to revenue that would occur if the changed rates were applied to profits from 1 April 1993.
[8] These figures ignore effects arising from the imputation system.
[9] These changes are assumed to take effect from April 1994.

DEFENCE

Next Steps

Mr. Cormack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how his Department is responding to the next steps initiative; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: My Department's response to next steps is part of the major programme of defence management reform in train. Next steps, in line with the principles of the citizens charter, places particular emphasis on efficiency, standards of service to customers and value for money. The Ministry of Defence's support organisations provide services to internal and external customers, but their primary role is to support the operational units in their delivery of military capability. Higher standards of service and performance will enhance the overall effectiveness of our defence capability.

Areas now under review include the Fleet Maintenance and Repair Organisation, the naval marine services organisation, RN training, Army logistic information systems, Army Engineer Services, RAF signals, and test and evaluation.

We are increasing the scale of this. Our aim is to extend the next steps programme to all significant defence support areas. This means that we shall also consider for defence agency status the whole of the naval support organisation including the naval bases and the storage and distribution function; the recruiting, pay and some personnel systems for each of the services; those schools not already in agencies; Army individual training; significant further elements of Army logistics in the base areas and RAF logistics; the medical organisations of each service; human factors research; tri-service communications systems; the Defence lands organisation; and elements of the procurement executive.

There is no presumption that an organisation included in this list will become an agency. This is a process which involves, inter alia, consideration of operational implications and of prior options, including privatisation and contracting out. Final decisions will be taken case-by-case if it is clear that the best solution is to retain the activity within the Ministry of Defence. Our aim is to have prepared the selected organisations for launch as defence agencies over the period to mid-1996. We expect to have completed a substantial part of the programme by mid-1995.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what means exist for the on-site treatment at AWE Aldermaston of solid radioactive wastes arising from operations at the site.

Mr. Aitken: Apart from limited compaction facilities, there are no facilities at AWE for the treatment of solid radioactive waste. All solid radioactive wastes are either disposed via authorised routes, such as Drigg, or stored safely and securely pending the availability of the Nirex repository.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in resolving the outstanding problems of radioactive waste management, with particular reference to the disposal of radioactive resins arising from submarine reactors, and the measurement and categorisation of plutonium contaminated material, identified at paragraph 6.9 of the 12th annual report of the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee in 1991.

Mr. Aitken: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett) on 13 May 1993, at column *571*.

Flag Exercises

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the squadrons whose crew have participated in flag exercises in north America since 1985, giving in each case *(a)* the date and name of the flag exercise and *(b)* the location of the squadron's work-up training prior to the exercise.

Mr. Hanley: Details of RAF participation in red-green flag exercises are not held centrally and information covering all of the period in question could be provided only at disproprotionate cost and effort. From 1988 however, the information requested is as follows:

Date	*Name*	*Squadrons*
October/November 1988	89–1	Numbers 15, 16, 17, 56, 92
April 1989	89–3	Numbers 14, 27, 617
April 1990	90–3	Numbers 16, 16, 31
April 1991	91–3	Numbers 1, 3, 4
January/February 1992	93-1	Numbers 2, 5, 9, 11, 29, 47, 55, 617

Details on Maple flag exercises are also not held centrally. The exercise takes place in May to June of each year, and RAF participation usually comprises either Jaguars and Harriers, which usually attend in alternate years.

Most substantive work-up training for flag exercises takes place either in the United Kingdom or at Goose Bay in Canada.

Low Flying

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many aircraft, and of what types, took part in the tactical leadership course at RAF Lossiemouth in May 1992; how many low-level sorties were undertaken; and how many of these were authorised down to a height of 100 ft.

Mr. Hanley: The tactical leadership training course held at RAF Lossiemouth in May 1992 involved eight Tornado GR1, two Tornado GR1a, six Tornado F3, four Harrier GR5, two Harrier GR7, four Buccaneer and four Hawk aircraft. Ninety-two low-level sorties were flown overland; none of them was authorised down to a height of 100 ft.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what regulations are contained in Joint Services Publication 318 concerning low-level flight over areas of concentrated population and public assemblies.

Mr. Hanley: Joint Services Publication 318 requires that aircraft flying over areas of concentrated population do so at sufficient height to permit a safe emergency landing outside the congested area—not less than 2,000 ft above ground level for fixed-wing aircraft and 1,000 ft for helicopters. If weather or other factors mean that sufficient height cannot be maintained, such areas are to be avoided unless doing so would endanger the aircraft. Flying over any place where a large number of people are assembled is prohibited below 1,000 ft except when specially authorised, or when it is necessary to do so while carrying out the arrival or departure procedure at an airfield or heliport. These regulations do not apply to aircraft participating in air displays or flypasts, to which separate procedures apply.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consideration has been given to extending the system by which aircrew entering a low-flying area broadcast their presence on a common military radio frequency, in such a way as to permit civil pilots to receive such broadcasts.

Mr. Hanley: At present there is no system for aircrew entering a low-flying area to broadcast their presence on a common military frequency.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the number of days in 1992 on which the observed weather was below the minima required for military low flying at *(a)* RAF Tain, *(b)* RAF Spadeadam, *(c)* RAF Wainfleet and *(d)* Pembrey.

Mr. Hanley: The information is not available in the format requested. The total number of hours lost in 1992 due to adverse weather at each range is, however, as follows:

Range	*Number of hours lost*
RAF Tain	152
RAF Spadeadam[1]	Nil
RAF Wainfleet	180
RAF Pembrey	340

[1] RAF Spadeadam is an all-weather facility.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many aircraft, and of what types, took part in the tactical leadership course *(a)* at RAF St. Mawgan in March and *(b)* at RAF Chivenor in November-December 1992; how many low-level sorties were undertaken; and how many of these were authorised down to a height of 100 ft.

Mr. Hanley: The tactical leadership training course held at RAF St. Mawgan in March 1993 involved six Tornado GR1, seven Tornado F3, four Buccaneer, four Sea Harrier, two Nimrod and one Sea King aircraft. Fourteen low-level sorties were flown overland. The helicopter tactics instructor course held at RAF Chivenor in November to December 1992 involved three Chinook, three Puma, two Wessex, three Harrier GR7, three Tornado GR1 and three Tornado F3 aircraft. Fifty-nine low-level sorties were flown overland, each involving two helicopters and one or two fast jets. No fixed-wing aircraft sorties were authorised down to a height of 100 ft during either course.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the dates and numbers of aircraft involved in training detachments of Harrier aircraft to West Freugh

since 1990; how many low-level sorties have been undertaken during these deployments; and which location is now the principal location for night low-level training for the RAF Harrier force.

Mr. Hanley: Training detachments of Harrier aircraft were held at West Freugh between 18 to 27 November 1991, 28 September to 2 October 1992, and 4 to 8 October 1993. Eight aircraft were deployed on each occasion. A total of 80 low-level sorties were flown during the three detachments. RAF Harrier night low-flying training is conducted throughout the UK night low-flying system.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Harrier GR7 pilots have received night low-level training at US Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, Arizona; when the training programme commenced; how many sorties are required for each pilot to qualify to fly the aircraft at low level at night; what is the minimum altitude flown during the training; how many aircraft are currently committed to the task; and what is the additional cost of carrying out this training at Yuma rather than *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* at Goose Bay, Canada.

Mr. Hanley: Fifteen Harrier GR7 pilots have received night low-level training at United States Marine Corps air station, Yuma. There has only been one detachment to date which took place between 13 April and 12 May 1993. Each pilot, who must already be combat ready by day, must complete a syllabus of 36 sorties in order to qualify as night combat ready. The syllabus includes a mixture of low and medium-level sorties with a minimum altitude flown of 200 ft. Twelve aircraft are currently committed to the task. The additional cost of carrying out this training at Yuma rather than the United Kingdom or Goose Bay is approximately £250,000, as the squadron pilots and groundcrew have to be accommodated commercially. There is also the opportunity cost of the air transport and tanker aircraft required to deploy and recover the aircraft.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his Department's policy on the institution of disciplinary proceedings against military aircrew in respect of unpremeditated or inadvertent breaches of flying regulations which come to light as a result of reports submitted under *(a)* the CONDOR system, *(b)* the APHAZ reporting system and *(c)* the air miss reporting system.

Mr. Hanley: There is no current record of reports submitted under the CONDOR system bringing to light cases of unpremeditated or inadvertent breaches of flying regulations. To take disciplinary action in such circumstances however, directly as the result of a CONDOR report, could seriously undermine a system which depends for its success on its confidentiality and which is of great value in assisting the furtherance of flight safety in the RAF. Under the air miss and APHAZ reporting systems, where aircrew are found to have been negligent, their unit commanders will take disciplinary action under the Air Force Act. The degree of the disciplinary action depends on the nature of the breach.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the categories of incident during military aircraft flying operations which are required to be reported under the CONDOR system.

Mr. Hanley: The confidential direct occurrence report —CONDOR—system allows aircrew and ATC personnel to report human error incidents anonymously. There are no categories of incident under the CONDOR system.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many instances of unauthorised penetration of controlled or restricted airspace in the United Kingdom by military aircraft climbing out from low level have been reported in each year since 1987.

Mr. Hanley: The number of reported incidents of unauthorised penetration of United Kingdom controlled and/or restricted airspace by military aircraft climbing out from low level is as follows:

Year	*No. of incidents*
1987	3
1988	6
1989	5
1990	7
1991	0
1992	4
1993	[1]2

[1] To date.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations have been received since 1981 from civil aviation interests seeking relaxation of the rules prohibiting entry into the highlands restricted area.

Mr. Hanley: Since 1981 the national air traffic services have received 79 requests for entry into the highlands restricted area from a total of 20 civil aviation operators.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the locations in the United Kingdom low-flying system where flow control has been *(a)* introduced and *(b)* withdrawn since the information given by his Department to the Defence Committee inquiry into low flying in 1989-90; and if he will state in each case the direction of the required flow.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested cannot be provided without disproportionate cost and effort. In September 1993, however, the Civil Aviation Authority published a chart entitled "The Chart of UK Areas of Intense Aerial Activity (AIAA), Aerial Tactics Areas (ATA) and Military Low Flying System" showing details of all current unidirectional flow controls in the United Kingdom low-flying system. A copy of the chart will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cases have occurred of unauthorised entry of aircraft into the highlands restricted area, in contravention of Statutory Instrument 1981 No. 1171; and what action was taken against the aircrew involved.

Mr. Hanley: Military aircraft are not subject to Statutory Instrument 1981 No. 1171.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the titles, dates and type of aircraft involved in all planned RAF participation in flag and similar air exercises in north America over the next 12 months.

Mr. Hanley: The aircraft planned to take part in the exercises are as follows:

Dates-1994	Exercise	Aircraft Type
January/February	Red Flag 94-2	Tornado GR1s
May/June	Maple Flag	Jaguars
June/July	Cope Thunder/ Distant Frontier	Tornado GR1s and F3s
August/September	Air Warrior	Harriers
October/November	Red Flag 95-1	Tornado GR1s and F3s

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the rules governing interception of low-flying aircraft by air defence aircraft in flow control areas of the United Kingdom low-flying system.

Mr. Hanley: Where air defence aircraft intercept low-flying aircraft in flow control areas of the United Kingdom low-flying system, all aircraft must be flown in compliance with the direction of the flow control.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many aircraft, and of what types, took part in the tactical leadership course at RAF St. Mawgan in October 1992; how many low-level sorties were undertaken; and how many of these were authorised down to a height of 100 ft.

Mr. Hanley: The tactical leadership training course held at RAF St. Mawgan in October 1992 involved six Tornado GR1, five Tornado F3, four Jaguar, four Buccaneer, two Hawk and two Sea Harrier aircraft. One hundred and six low-level sorties were flown overland; none of them were authorised down to a height of 100 ft.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many low-level sorties were flown by British military aircraft in each of the 250 low-flying areas in Germany in each month in 1989.

Mr. Hanley: There were a total of 21,100 recorded entries by British military fixed wing aircraft into the 250 low-flying areas in the Federal Republic of Germany during 1989. A breakdown by month and area is not available.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the current requirement for Royal Navy Sea Harrier pilots to maintain qualifications to fly at less than 250 ft.

Mr. Hanley: There is no current requirement for Royal Navy Sea Harrier pilots to maintain qualifications to fly at less than 250 ft.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many low-level sorties were flown over the United Kingdom by the two German Air Force Tornados which were deployed to RAF Mildenhall between 19 and 21 July; and what was the minimum authorised altitude for each sortie.

Mr. Hanley: No low-level sorties were flown.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the purposes of the deployments of two Norwegian Air Force F16s to RAF Lakenheath *(a)* from 6 to 11 July and *(b)* from 20 to 22 July; how many low-level sorties they undertook in the United Kingdom; and what was their minimum authorised altitude while flying in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hanley: The two Norwegian F16 aircraft were deployed to RAF Lakenheath to participate with USAF aircraft in air-to-air training over the North sea. The aircraft did not undertaken any low-level sorties; the minimum height at which they were authorised to fly in the United Kingdom was 2,000 ft.

Secretariat (Air Staff) 2b

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the functions of Secretariat (Air Staff) 2b; and how many staff have been employed there in each year since 1979.

Mr. Hanley: Secretariat (Air Staff) 2b is responsible for advising on the policy and political aspects of the United Kingdom military low-flying system and dealing with the staffing of public complaints and inquiries about low-flying training.

The number of staff employed in that section in each year since 1979 is:

Year	Number
1979-83	6·0
1984	7·5
1985-86	7·0
1987-88	8·0
1989	11·5
1990	13·5
1991	10·5
1992-93	8·5

Note: Excludes 50 per cent. of one principal grade responsible for whole of Secretariat (Air Staff) 2 throughout the period.

Aircraft Noise

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of his Department's research and development programmes in the areas listed in appendix II to the annex to the summary of the final report of the NATO CCMS pilot study on aircraft noise in a modern society.

Mr. Hanley: My Department is involved in several studies to further the understanding of noise associated with military aircraft. In parallel, we continue to develop noise modelling and prediction capabilities. In collaboration with authorities in the United States and Canada we have completed initial work into the feasibility of a study to investigate the possible effects on health of noise from low-flying aircraft, and a report is being prepared. In the case of airspace management, a contract has been let to develop an automated low-flying flight planning enquiry and notification system— ALFENS.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress in implementing the recommendations of the final report of the NATO CCMS pilot study of aircraft noise in a modern society.

Mr. Hanley: The NATO CCMS pilot study on aircraft noise was completed in 1989. A follow-up group was created the following year to implement its technical recommendations. This group exchanges information

between participating countries and encourages individual or multinational studies. The United Kingdom contributed to a major symposium on helicopter noise, sponsored by NATO CCMS and held in the USA, and is currently participating in collaborative working parties engaged in noise modelling around airports and in the investigation and modelling of helicopter noise.

RAF Flying, Turkey

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the minimum permitted altitude for Royal Air Force aircraft flying over Turkey.

Mr. Hanley: RAF aircraft do not conduct any low flying over Turkey. If low flying were carried out, however, the minimum altitude would normally be 500 ft, although flying down to 250 ft could be permitted when undertaking practice bombing runs.

Tornado

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the minimum authorised altitudes for the flights by two German Air Force Tornados from RAF Lakenheath on the evening of 26 July.

Mr. Hanley: Two thousand feet.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the purpose of the deployment of Italian Air Force Tornados to RAF Honington from *(a)* 23-24 July 1992 and *(b)* 12 July to 6 August 1993; what was the date of their departure and their destination; how many low-level sorties they undertook in the United Kingdom; and what was their minimum authorised altitude while flying in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hanley: Italian Air Force Tornado aircraft were deployed to RAF Honington between 23 July and 7 August 1992, and between 12 July and 6 August 1993, to conduct low-flying training and use the electonic weapons training range at Spadeadam. The aircraft subsequently returned to bases in Italy. The number of low-level sorties flown during these deployments could not be provided without disproportionate cost and effort. The aircraft were athorised to operate down to 500 ft in the United Kingdom low-flying system.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what decisions have been taken concerning the viability of repairing Tornado GR1 serial number ZA597 since its accident in November 1983.

Mr. Hanley: The Royal Air Force decided, based on an assessment carried out in 1983 on the damage incurred, that it was viable to repair the aircraft.

Challenger 2

Lady Olga Maitland: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to confirm the order of the second batch of Challenger 2 tanks.

Mr. Aitken: A number of options for equipping the Army's Challenger 1 tank regiments have been examined; these include the possibility of a further purchase of CR2 tanks. An announcement will be made as soon as a decision on the way ahead has been reached.

Imphal Barracks, York

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the capital value at current prices of the office accommodation at Imphal barracks, York used at present by Army manning and records staff.

Mr. Hanley: The capital value of individual sites on the Defence estate is commercial-in-confidence. The office accommodation currently used by the manning and record office is in the centre of the Imphal barracks site and therefore has no realisable value. The intention is to find other defence uses for the office space once the MRO functions move to Glasgow.

Naval Forces (Maintenance Payments)

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes he proposes to the provisions in the Naval Forces (Enforcement of Maintenance Liabilities) Act 1947 relating to the limitations on authorisations of deduction of maintenance from an individual's pay to cases where the service person concerned has actually attended or been represented at the court hearing.

Mr. Hanley: Such changes to the provisions of the Naval Forces (Enforcement of Maintenance Liabilities) Act 1947 as were deemed necessary were made in the Child Support Act 1991 (Consequential Amendments) Order 1993.

Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

Mr. Hicks: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will make an offer to the Government of Paraguay for a military officer to undertake a course at the Royal Military academy, Sandhurst; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: Details of training provided for overseas military personnel are not normally disclosed as they are confidential between Governments.

Devonport and Rosyth Dockyards

Mr. Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what maximum level of foreign involvement in the ownership and management he envisages in the successful bidder for the ownership of Devonport and Rosyth royal dockyards.

Mr. Aitken: No decisions have been taken about ownership restrictions, but the Government accept the need for appropriate safeguards.

Barracks (Tenders)

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the companies which have been invited to tender for the design and construction of married service men's quarters at Redford barracks, new works for junior ranks at Redford barracks and works at Glencorse barracks; and if he will now give further consideration to the case for inviting suitable companies based in Lothian region to tender for these works.

Mr. Hanley: The following companies have been invited to tender for the design and construction of married service men's quarters at Redford barracks:

Tarmac Construction Ltd.
West Lothian
John Laing Construction Ltd.
Edinburgh
Wimpey Construction Ltd.
Glasgow
Mowlem Scotland Ltd.
Glasgow
Alfred McAlpine
Glasgow
Miller Construction
Edinburgh

The tender lists for the new works for Junior Ranks at Redford barracks have not been finalised.

The following have been invited to tender for the works at Glencorse barracks:
Hall and Tawse Scotland Ltd.
Aberdeen
John Laing Construction Ltd.
Edinburgh
M. J. Gleeson Group Plc.
Stirling
Balfour Beatty Construction (Scotland) Ltd.
Edinburgh

There are no plans to add further companies to the tender lists for married service men's quarters at Redford barracks and Glencorse barracks.

Civil Servant Posts

Mr. John Townend: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of his Department's civil servant posts have been privatised or contracted out between 1 January 1988 and 1 September 1993.

Mr. Aitken: A total of 9,562 MOD civil service posts have been contracted out since 1 April 1988. Figures are collected by financial year.

Public Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Hanley: No such projects have commenced in my Department since the 1992 autumn statement. Work is, however, continuing on the proposal to establish a new non-profit-making organisation in the private sector to assume responsibility for the ownership and management of the married quarter estate in Great Britain.

RAF East Camp, Hendon

Mr. Gorst: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who owns the narrow bridge adjacent to the Royal Air Force east camp at Hendon; what assessment he has made of the effect of the existence of this bridge on the possibility of disposing of the site; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The two bridges adjacent to the Royal Air Force east camp at Hendon are both owned by British Rail and, at present, only single-lane road traffic can pass beneath them. Employment-generating development, would be road traffic intensive and would require, inter alia, the widening of the bridges, at the prospective developer's significant expense. A use which generates a lower volume of road traffic would reduce the need for infrastructural improvements.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Discussions

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what communications he has received outlining the contents of the recent discussions between the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume) and Mr. Gerry Adams; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Patrick Mayhew: I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to the House on 1 November at columns 19-21.

Archaeological Sites

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will list for the last 10 years the archaeological moated grange sites that have been demolished;

(2) if he will list the archaeological moated grange sites that are due to be lost because of planning permission approval being granted.

Mr. Atkins: There are no known moated grange sites in Northern Ireland.

Bypasses

Rev. William McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Government plans to construct the bypass for *(a)* Magherafelt, *(b)* Cookstown, *(c)* Newtownstewart and *(d)* Omagh.

Mr. Atkins: Magherafelt bypass and Newtownstewart bypass are included in the Department's six to 15-year major road works programme. Whilst Cookstown eastern distributor road is not presently included in this programme, its position is currently being reviewed.

The first stage of the Omagh throughpass was completed in 1990 while work on the second stage is programmed to start in 1995-96.

The precise timing of all schemes is subject to future funding levels.

Fire Certificates

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the application of the rules regarding fire certificates to Government offices in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Atkins: Fire certificates for Government offices in Northern Ireland are issued by the Department of Economic Development under the provisions of the Fire Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1984. The standards which have to be met by Government offices are identical to those which apply to offices in the private sector.

Republic of Ireland Ministers

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he next proposes to meet Ministers of the Republic of Ireland; and what topics he will discuss.

Sir Patrick Mayhew: I look forward to meeting Ministers of the Republic of Ireland at the forthcoming Anglo-Irish intergovernmental conference. Discussions are likely to range over a variety of topics, including the security situation in Northern Ireland, political developments, and social and economic themes.

Unemployment

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the level of unemployment in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Atkins: At 9 September 1993 there were 108,003 unemployed claimants in Northern Ireland—14·4 per cent. of the work force—representing a decrease of 1,388 compared with the previous month and a decrease of 2,383 compared with September 1992.

Joy Riding

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many joy-riding road accidents have occurred in the Province leading to *(a)* deaths and *(b)* injury in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Wheeler: The number of road accidents involving stolen vehicles that led to deaths were as follows:

	Number
1989	1
1990	2
1991	4
1992	0

Statistics on fatal accidents involving stolen vehicles prior to 1989 and on accidents involving stolen vehicles causing injury are not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many confirmed cases of BSE were reported between 1 January 1992 and 30 September 1992 from each county in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The information requested is as follows:

County	*Total*
Antrim	68
Armagh	10
Down	39
Fermanagh	13
Londonderry	29
Tyrone	49

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Overseas Aid

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the amount of overseas aid funding actually granted by Her Majesty's Government in each year since 1980.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Total aid in 1980 to 1992-93 including assistance to central and eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union was as follows:

	£ million
1980	966
1981	1,184
1982	1,085
1983	1,174
1984	1,316
1985	1,324
1986	1,350
1987	1,295
[1]1987-88	1,410
1988-89	1,616
1989-90	1,800
1990-91	1,908
1991-92	2,131
[2]1992-93	2,391

[1] Prior to 1987-88, British Aid Statistics was produced on a calendar year basis.
[2] This figure is provisional pending publication of 1993 British Aid Statistics.

Environment and Development Conference

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the answer of 21 October, *Official Report*, column *265*, what was the financial contribution his Department made in support of the Partnerships for Change conference in Manchester.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The Overseas Development Administration did not make a financial contribution in support of the conference.

Paraguay

Mr. Hicks: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list all financial aid projects currently being made by the United Kingdom to Paraguay, and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The United Kingdom's small aid programme to Paraguay involves technical co-operation rather than financial aid. The bulk of the programme is focused on the natural resources sector. It currently comprises the following projects:

assistance with a major economic review of the livestock sub-sector;
capability strengthening programme with Pro-Paraguay—the organisation responsible for promoting Paraguayan exports and attracting foreign investment;
United Kingdom training programme—involving scholarships for some 14 Paraguayans annually;
assistance in undertaking a post-census assessment survey.

The ODA is also supporting a number of non-governmental organisation projects in Paraguay through its joint funding scheme.

EDUCATION

Value Added Tax

11. **Mr. Jamieson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what representations he has received regarding changes in VAT with regard to schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: Taxation policy is a matter for my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Department has, however, received several letters about the implications of extending VAT to areas not currently taxed.

Grant-maintained Schools

12. **Mr. Jacques Arnold:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what guidance he issues as to co-operation between local education authorities and the grant-maintained schools in their areas as a method of enhancing educational provision.

Mr. Patten: My Department has recently issued a consultation letter on co-ordinated admissions arrangements between schools and LEAs and will be looking to produce further guidance early next year. The special educational needs code of practice, issued in draft last week, emphasises co-operation between all schools and LEAs in the interests of children with special educational needs. A circular on provision for under-fives is also planned and guidance will be issued shortly on school transport.

23. **Mr. Shersby:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what additional resources are available for the expansion of popular grant-maintained schools; what are the criteria for obtaining available resources; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Robin Squire: The popularity of schools is one of the factors taken into account, where relevant, when determining capital allocations between self-governing schools.

In 1993-94, £56 million was distributed for capital projects in self-governing schools.

In addition, all self-governing schools receive a pupil-based capital allocation which also provides a direct link between popularity and funding.

24. **Mr. Riddick:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make a statement on the number of *(a)* secondary and *(b)* primary schools which have taken on grant-maintained status.

Mr. Robin Squire: A total of 514 secondary schools and 182 primary schools are now enjoying the independence that self-governing status brings. This gives a total of 696 GM schools—over three times the number that were operating on the day of the general election last year. A further 16 secondary schools and 37 primary schools are already approved for self-governing status and we look forward to welcoming them to the sector in January and April next year.

Many parents are deciding that self-governing status is right for their children's schools. In particular there has been a rapid increase in the number of primary schools opting for GM status. Over one third of all primary school ballots have taken place since 1 April this year.

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many grant-maintained schools there are in each of the seven counties of the south-west; how many applications have now been approved but not yet come into effect; and how many applications are awaiting approval.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested is set out in the table:

County	*GM Schools*	*Approvals*	*Proposals under consideration*
Avon	2	—	—
Cornwall	—	—	—
Devon	5	1	1
Dorset	10	—	1
Gloucestershire	27	2	4
Somerset	2	1	—
Wiltshire	15	1	8
Total	61	5	14

In addition, there are five schools in the south-west which have voted "yes" in ballots but which have yet to submit applications, all 11 schools where there are ballots pending.

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many schools have now achieved grant-maintained status; how many more schools he expects to achieve this status in the future; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Robin Squire: There are 696 self-governing schools in England. A further 65 are already approved for self-governing status and 118 more have application in the pipeline or ballots pending.

Self-governing status is the best form of management for schools and we are confident that schools which have not yet taken the opportunity to embark on the GM process will do so in increasing numbers. We hope that over time all schools will become self-governing, but this will be determined by parents in ballots.

Mr. Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the special purpose grants—VAT—given to each grant-maintained school for each financial year since 1991-92, including the current year.

Mr. Robin Squire *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* The information is given in the table.

Grant-maintained Schools
Payments of Special Purpose Grant (VAT)

School	*1991-92* £	*1992-93* £	*[1]1993-94* £
Abbotswood Middle School	—	1,538	3,846
Abraham Darby School	—	—	644
Acle High School	—	1,271	174
Adams' Grammar School	25,340	28,477	14,562
Alcester Grammar School	—	—	5,613
Alder Coppice Primary	—	—	266
Aldridge School	—	—	947
All Hallows RC School	—	—	29,619
All Saints CE Primary School	—	—	188
All Saints CE Primary School	—	—	754
All Saints RC School	—	—	4,484
Aloeric School	—	671	1,250
Alperton High School	—	—	1,283
Andoversford Primary School	—	—	196
Anglo European School	—	—	437
Appleby Grammar School	—	—	2,708
Applemore Technology School	—	—	296
Archbishop Temple School	—	—	16,026
Archbishop Tenision's School	—	—	18,947
Arnewood School	—	8,615	15,945
Ashton on Mersey School	—	—	2,474
Ashton St. Peters Lower	—	—	595
Atherstone Upper	—	3,889	—
Audenshaw High School	2,758	9,897	4,878
Aylesford School	—	—	5,082
Bacup and Rawenstall Grammar School	7,392	10,158	6,093
Baines School	—	38,201	20,060
Balcarras School	—	1,659	1,590
Bankfield High School	—	—	1,240

School	1991-92 £	1992-93 £	[1]1993-94 £
Barnehurst Infants School	—	2,344	1,065
Barnehurst Junior School	—	1,652	894
Barton Court Grammar School	—	—	575
Bay House Grant-Maintained School	—	—	1,365
Beacon School	—	17,644	9,220
Beanfield Junior School	—	—	270
Beaverwood School for Girls	—	11,388	1,598
Beechen Cliff School	8,878	13,350	7,124
Beechview Middle School	—	—	1,280
Belmont Primary School	—	6,257	3,366
Bexley Erith Technical Boys School	—	—	261
Bingley Grammar School	28,102	51,517	26,162
Bishop Stortford's School	—	619	4,260
Bishop Thomas Grant School	—	—	32,176
Bishopshalt School	9,083	21,291	—
Blessed Edward Oldcorne RC High School	—	—	3,134
Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic High School	—	—	2,775
Blue Coat CE Grant-Maintained School	—	—	1,551
Bohunt Community School	—	—	336
Borough Green Primary School	—	1,652	1,314
Borrow Wood Junior School	—	1,550	660
Bourne Primary School	2,928	5,599	2,768
Bournemouth Girls School	—	3,612	1,537
Bournemouth Grammar School	16,820	3,375	3,888
Brampton Junior School	—	—	140
Branston School and Community College	—	—	1,355
Bromfords School, Wickford	—	—	4,014
Bromsgrove CE Middle School	—	—	1,642
Bruton Primary School	—	2,503	1,932
Bullers Wood School for Girls	12,802	18,004	1,689
Burgate School	3,884	10,817	2,907
Burntwood School	3,089	23,091	3,421
Bushey Hall School	—	—	18
Bushey Meads GM School	—	—	4,638
Caistor School	4,418	8,625	4,580
Calday Grange Grammar School	—	—	5,742
Calmore GM Middle School	—	—	1,005
Canon Slade School	—	—	41,139
Cardinal Griffin RC School	—	—	3,240
Cardinal Hinsley High School	—	—	3,862
Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School	47,613	54,179	28,038
Carre's Grammar School	21,790	26,897	—
Cartmel Priory CE School	—	—	1,308
Castle Hall GM School	—	6,421	4,113
Castle Hills School, Gainsborough	—	6,169	6,652
Castlefield Combined School	—	—	88
Castleview Combined School	—	—	594
Chalvedon School	—	4,724	5,136
Chapel St. Leonards County Primary School	—	—	154
Charlton School	—	—	338
Charville Primary School	—	—	683
Chatham Grammar School	—	2,096	3,579
Chellaston Junior School	—	—	157
Chelmer Valley High School	—	—	7
Chelmsford County High School	—	2,844	1,287
Cheltenham Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre	—	—	327
Chipping Camden School	—	2,819	6,570
Chosen Hill School	—	2,978	7,104
Christ Church CE JMI School, Chorley	—	7,757	3,930
Churchdown School	—	10,051	7,410
Cirencester Deer Park School	—	—	668
Clacton High School	—	—	502
Claremont High School	2,163	10,615	4,098
Cliff Park High School	—	—	2,880
Clifford First School	—	1,044	1,650
Clitheroe Royal Grammar School	29,006	50,917	29,433
Colchester Royal Grammar	—	—	1,043
Collingtree CE Primary School	—	—	163
Colyton Grammar School	7,723	13,281	542
Convent of Jesus and Mary	—	—	13,786
Coopers Company and Coborn	—	—	33,776
Coopers School, Chislehurst	8,264	17,911	7,710
Copland Community	—	2,577	—
Coppins Green School	—	—	238
Corbet GM School	—	—	3,780
Cranbrook School	9,703	43,045	21,753
Cranwell County Primary	—	—	257
Crompton Fold Primary School	—	1,803	1,995
Crossgates Primary School	—	—	256
Crosshall Infant School	—	1,262	1,941
Crosshall Junior School	—	346	789
Crossley Heath School	34,283	36,722	19,324
Crypt School	—	254	—
Dallam School	—	—	17,774
Dame Alice Owens School	—	—	32,607
Danesholme Junior School	—	—	1,248
Dartford Grammar School	6,043	10,743	6,042
Dartford Grammar School for Girls	—	8,601	4,188
Davenant Foundation School	—	—	27,888
Deacon's School	—	—	1,761
Deanery Infant School	—	—	815
Deanery Junior School	—	—	857
Deanes School	—	17,848	—
Dereham Church VA First School	—	5,812	3,044
Dollis Junior School	—	—	625
Downham Market High School	—	19,394	10,746
Downton CE VC Primary School	—	—	384
Ecclesbourne School	26,583	35,320	19,323
Ellen Wilkinson High School	—	8,427	3,522
Elliott School	—	16,574	2,585
Elmwood Primary School	—	4,688	1,920
Epsom and Ewell High School	—	8,727	4,536
Ermine School	—	2,291	1,422
Ethelburga Primary School	—	1,005	1,058
Fairfield High School For Girls	—	—	680
Fallibroome High School	—	—	1,816
Finchley Catholic High	—	—	4,675
Frances Bardsley School	—	—	8
Francis Bacon	—	1,640	—
Gartree School	—	162	188
George Spencer School	—	—	5,064
Glyn School	1,684	5,592	7,728
Gordon's School	4,512	19,254	9,559
Graveney School	10,462	17,771	7,323
Great Barr School	—	20,203	4,822
Great Totham County Primary School	—	—	309
Greenford High School	—	3,567	1,429
Greenwood Dale School	—	—	1,936
Gresham County Primary	651	2,231	1,092
Guildford County Secondary School	—	—	371
Gumley House Convent School	—	—	28,140
Gunnersbury Catholic School	—	—	27,606
Hall Green School	—	—	1,476
Hamilton Combined School	—	—	786
Handsworth Grammar School for Boys	36,135	43,037	22,390
Hanson GM School	—	—	2,516
Harraby School	—	—	5,814
Hartshill School	3	1,490	4,126
Hatchford Primary School	—	786	5,025
Haydon School	—	4,996	2,004
Hayton CE Primary School	—	2,577	1,308
Heacham Middle School	980	2,229	1,014
Heanor Gate School	—	—	1,333
Heckmondwike Grammar School	12,229	12,636	5,922
Henbury County High School	—	—	624
Hendon School	12,299	17,085	8,794
Herne Bay Junior School	—	—	188
Herschel Grammar School	—	866	1,038
Hertingfordbury School	—	1,957	3,054
Highams Park School	7,680	378	5,013

School	1991-92 £	1992-93 £	[1]1993-94 £
Highcliffe Comprehensive School	—	199	258
Hillbrook Primary School	—	—	4,042
Hillside Infant School	—	—	9
Hillside Junior School	—	—	88
Hillview School For Girls	—	—	1,554
Holland Park Primary	—	—	489
Hollinsclough CE Primary School	—	—	75
Holly Hall School	—	—	129
Holy Cross CE Junior School	—	—	236
Holy Cross Convent School	—	—	19,832
Holy Family Combined School	—	2,835	6,423
Holy Innocents RC Primary School	—	2,338	4,776
Holy Trinity	—	—	6,819
Holy Trinity CE Middle School	—	—	199
Holy Trinity CE Senior School	—	—	19,081
Hordle CE GM Primary School	—	—	414
Huttoft County Primary School	—	—	219
Jews Free School	—	—	7,565
John Fisher School	10,229	41,184	21,481
John Paul II RC School	—	—	18,847
John Port School	—	—	10,125
Katharine Lady Berkeley School	—	1,220	2,700
Katherine's Primary School	—	676	1,014
Kettleshulme CE Primary School	—	2,445	1,075
Killinghall First School	—	—	714
King Edward VIAston School	—	—	17,994
King Edward VI Camp Hill Boys School	—	—	19,028
King Edward VI Camp Hill Girls School	—	—	18,276
King Edward VI Five Ways School	—	—	19,286
King Edward VI G School, Chelmsford	—	38,694	2,766
King Edward VI Grammar School, Lincs	32,371	20,893	1,234
King Edward VI Handsworth School	—	—	23,616
King Harold School	—	—	171
King John School	12,310	—	122
Kingsley Park Middle School	—	—	2,229
Kirkbie Kendal School	27,857	51,592	26,520
La Retraite School	12,550	43,789	22,851
La Sainte Union Convent School	—	—	5,261
Lacey Gardens Junior School	—	—	4,090
Lady Elizabeth Hastings CE Primary School	—	—	259
Lady Manners School	—	—	2,276
Lancaster Girls Grammar School	11,269	14,901	7,032
Lancaster Royal Grammar School	43,674	48,885	25,572
Lavington School	—	3,690	3,014
Lincoln Christ's Hospital School	15,158	68,201	34,528
Lincroft Middle School	—	—	1,229
Linton Primary	—	—	472
Lodge Park School	—	—	1,332
London Oratory School	93,471	99,710	53,360
Lowbourne GM Infants School	—	—	348
Lowbourne Junior School	—	—	187
Lynn Grove VC High School	—	—	1,158
Magdalen CE/Meth Primary School	2,079	—	454
Malcolm Sargent County Primary School	—	—	1,726
Marling School	17,642	20,015	10,146
Marshland High School	—	27,412	10,560
Mellow Lane School	—	7,690	1,749
Mill Hill County School	—	11,691	9,134
Millbrook Infant School	—	—	79
Millbrook Junior School	—	—	158
Monks' Dyke High School	—	1,703	3,210
Montagu School	—	—	408
Motram St. Andrew Primary	—	—	211
Moulton Primary School	3,879	6,449	3,237
Myton School	—	2,811	2,020
Netherthorpe School	38,301	42,664	16,650
Newent Community School	—	—	1,398
Newlands Spring Primary School	—	70	645
Newport Free Grammar School	—	—	2,881
Newstead Wood School	—	6,278	2,400
Newton CE School	5,410	9,566	4,978
Nicholas Breakspear RC School	—	—	4,137
Nonsuch High School for Girls	7,541	23,448	9,065
North Rauceby Primary School	—	1,565	1,096
Northampton School for Boys	—	—	3,760
Northlands Junior School	—	—	5
Northwick Park County Infant School	—	—	506
Northwood School	—	8,283	1,605
Norwich Road School	—	5,204	2,822
Notre Dame High School	—	—	3,286
Notre Dame School	—	—	4,095
Oak Farm Infant School	—	1,453	2,493
Oak Farm Junior School	—	2,734	2,940
Oakington Manor Primary School	—	—	709
Oaklands RC Comprehensive School	—	—	4,792
Old Swinford Hospital	30,675	33,108	16,764
Oldfield School	—	1,474	2,260
Orton Wistow Primary School	—	—	153
Osidge Primary School	—	—	97
Overstone School	—	295	—
Parkside First School	—	2,027	1,176
Parkstone Grammar School, Poole	0	7,440	4,848
Parmiters School	30,333	57,055	29,076
Pate's Grammar School	48,033	47,881	24,738
Pittville School	—	—	89
Poole Technical High School	—	—	1,947
Priory Combined School	—	292	1,356
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School	6,862	5,875	4,526
Queen Elizabeth GM GS, Alford	17,939	21,883	—
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Horn	—	5,878	2,386
Queen Elizabeth's GM School for Boys	33,923	35,738	18,012
Queen Elizabeth's School	—	—	3,043
Queen Mary's Grammar School	—	—	2,698
Queen Mary's High School	—	—	2,824
Queens School	—	—	6,378
Raines Foundation School	30,331	58,544	33,498
Rainsford School	—	—	3,963
Rastrick High School	—	—	25,692
Ravensdale Middle School	—	3,009	2,068
Reading School	5,980	4,710	3,843
Redgate Middle School, Hunstanton	195	2,270	1,038
Richard Challoner School	—	—	19,716
Rickmansworth School	—	—	1,329
Ringwood Comprehensive School	—	—	5,736
Robert Kett Middle School	—	2,935	808
Robert Napier School, Gillingham	—	1,120	1,284
Robert Pattinson School	—	4,389	1,284
Robinswood Primary School	—	4,139	2,205
Rolph CE VA Primary School	—	—	3,249
Roseacre Junior School	—	—	261
Roseberry School, Epsom	—	16,459	11,090
Rugby High School for Girls	—	—	353
Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School	—	—	3,610
Saffron Walden High School	—	—	18,398
Saintbridge School	—	2,643	5,592
Salesian College	—	11,375	19,236
Salterlee Primary School	—	1,467	948
Salvatorian College	—	—	2,575
Scotby CE Primary School	—	3,088	3,516
Send-CE First School	0	957	660
Sexey's School	12,686	33,341	16,260
Sharnbrook Upper School	—	—	612
Sheldon School	—	—	1,350
Shenington CE Primary School	—	—	1,572
Simon Langton Boys' Grammar School	7,885	—	35,208
Sir John Gleed Girls High School	—	7,598	5,906
Sir Roger Manwood's School	—	19,930	18,372

School	1991-92 £	1992-93 £	[1]1993-94 £
Skegness Grammar School	13,113	17,506	8,650
Small Heath School	2,944	—	—
Smithy Bridge Primary School	—	—	2,094
Snodland CE Primary School	—	—	801
South Wooton School	—	300	404
Southend Girls High School	—	—	3,180
Southend High School for Boys	—	—	561
Southfields School	—	—	840
Spalding County Primary School	—	—	203
St. Andrew's CE Primary School	—	—	2,904
St. Andrew's CE Primary School (Hill)	—	—	811
St. Andrew's CE Primary School (Lincoln)	—	—	229
St. Augustine's RC High School	14,641	29,722	20,355
St. Augustine's School	—	—	15,530
St. Bartholomew's School	43,802	19,899	—
St. Bede's School	—	—	11,019
St. Benedict's RC School	—	—	2,248
St. Bernadette Junior School	—	4,287	4,878
St. Boniface's College	—	—	19,856
St. Botolph's CE Primary School	—	—	728
St. Catherine's RC for Girls	—	—	3,170
St. Clare's RC Primary School	—	—	692
St. Clements High School	—	—	1,997
St. Columba's RC Boys School	—	—	20,523
St. Edmunds RC Comprehensive	—	—	2,977
St. Francesca Cabrini RC Primary	—	—	10,826
St. Francis RC Primary School	—	—	866
St. Francis Xavier's College	54,629	64,784	33,132
St. George's CE School, Gravesend	30,253	56,959	29,358
St. George's RC School	—	9,067	2,779
St. George's School	6,980	—	2,468
St. Giles CE Primary School	—	—	384
St. Gregory RC Primary School	—	—	6,741
St. Gregory's Catholic Comp School	—	3,233	24,789
St. Helen's Primary School Bluntisham	—	—	792
St. James CE Primary	—	—	4,100
St. James' CE School Bolton	33,437	39,535	21,696
St. John Fisher RC (VA) Primary School	—	—	637
St. John Fisher RC Comp	—	—	3,161
St. John Fisher, Chatham	—	—	30,960
St. John Rigby School	—	12,897	26,777
St. John the Baptist School, Woking	17,648	38,768	20,438
St. John's School	—	—	802
St. Joseph's RC Primary School	—	—	7,962
St. Josephs College	—	—	5,528
St. Katherine's CE VA Primary School	—	—	735
St. Laurence CE Junior School	—	—	757
St. Martin In The Field High School	—	—	3,373
St. Martin's School	—	—	4,161
St. Mary and St. Joseph's School	—	—	19,371
St. Mary's CE High School	—	—	5,070
St. Mary's CE Primary School	—	—	589
St. Mary's RC Primary School	1,548	7,485	3,816
St. Michael's Catholic Grammar School	—	—	3,185
St. Michael's RC School	—	—	3,668
St. Michaels School	—	—	3,343
St. Olave's and St. Saviour's School	—	9,944	20,045
St. Osyth CE Primary School	—	—	797
St. Paul's RC Primary School	—	—	1,335
St. Paul's School	—	—	19,966
St. Peter and St. Paul RC High School	—	—	2,104
St. Peter's RC Primary School	—	—	1,305
St. Philomena's School	—	—	23,831
St. Simon Stock School	—	12,133	24,435
St. Thomas More High School For Boys	—	12,105	2,545
St. Thomas More RC Primary School	—	—	616
St. Thomas More RC School	—	37,211	34,766
St. Thomas More School	—	—	7,352
St. Thomas the Apostle School	—	—	3,513
St. Walburga's RC Primary School	—	—	7,215
St. Wilfrid's CE High School	—	—	6,336
St. Gregorys RC High	—	—	6,346
Stanground College	—	—	6,717
Stoneleigh First School	—	2,629	444
Stroud High School	15,196	18,907	9,600
Studley High School	—	—	558
Takeley Primary	—	—	80
Teign School	—	—	3,406
Tewkesbury School	—	1,145	264
The Appleton School	—	—	100
The Archbishop School	—	19,775	16,737
The Boswells School	—	4,767	792
The Canterbury School	—	8,163	5,832
The Chalfonts School	—	1,262	1,046
The Douay Martyrs School	—	—	35,457
The Fairfax School	—	—	1,147
The GS For Girls, Wilmington	810	—	—
The Hedley Walter School	—	—	201
The Holy Family RC School	—	—	677
The John Henry Newman School	—	—	4,355
The King's School	—	12,070	15,157
The Kings School Grantham	39,158	15,413	5,248
Latymer School	—	—	5,944
The Leventhorpe School	—	—	1,433
The Pingle School	—	—	1,948
The Priory Primary School	—	740	2,066
The Skinner's School	—	36,577	18,969
The St. Thomas Becket School	—	—	3,494
Thomas More GM School	—	—	2,994
Thomas Whitehead CE School	—	7,744	4,011
Thornton School	—	—	3,150
Tiffin School	—	8,028	4,690
Torquay Boys Grammar School	—	4,788	4,770
Trinity School	—	14,868	22,960
Turnham Primary School	—	1,449	5,244
Warwick Bridge Primary School	—	—	103
Watford Boys Grammar School	4,745	—	3,789
Watford Girls Grammar School	—	—	2,986
Weavers School	—	2,535	5,280
West Hatch High School	—	—	291
West Hill School	—	—	6,366
Westborough School	—	924	—
Westcliffe High School for Girls	—	7,182	7,305
Westcliffe High School for Boys	6,078	11,616	2,100
Westlands High School	—	—	657
Wheatfields Junior School	—	1,106	906
Whitelocke Infant and Nursery School	—	—	486
Wibsey School	—	—	593
William Alvey CE Junior School	—	6,373	2,742
William Farr CE School	—	2,276	1,444
William Gilbert Endowed	—	—	619
William Robertson School	—	—	89
Wilsons School	37,749	42,599	21,793
Winchcombe Community School	—	—	443
Windmill Primary School	—	—	60
Wirral Grammar School for Boys	—	—	2,953
Wold Newton Primary School	428	650	324
Wolverhampton Girls High School	15,851	16,598	8,752
Wood End First School	—	720	1,363
Wood End Middle School	—	364	590
Woodnewton Way Junior School	0	0	894
Woodroffe School	5,499	11,070	5,861
Wrenn School	—	2,565	7,974
Yarborough High School	2,406	3,685	6,630
Yattendon Middle School	—	—	156

[1] Payments from 1 April to 30 September 1993.

Education Standards

13. **Mr. Mullin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education when he last discussed education standards with Mr. Tim Brighouse or Mr. Roy Pryke.

Mr. Patten: I have held no recent discussions with Mr. Brighouse or Mr. Pryke about their views on educational standards. I am, however, familiar with their work.

Ethnic Minorities

15. **Ms Lynne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the effects of cuts in section 11 funding on the educational opportunities of ethnic groups.

Mr. Robin Squire: Provision for the education of pupils from ethnic groups is primarily a matter for schools and local education authorities. There have been no cuts this year in section 11 funding. The Department will monitor the effects of the reduction in the rate of support for future years through the Office for Standards in Education.

Nursery Education

16. **Mr. Grocott:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his latest estimate of the proportion of four-year-olds in local authority nursery educational classes.

Mr. Robin Squire: In 1992, 13 per cent. of four-year-olds in England attended LEA nursery schools or classes, either full or part time. However, if those attending infant classes are also included, this proportion is 82 per cent.

Further Education Grants

17. **Mr. Beith:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the working of the system of discretionary grants for further education.

Mr. Boswell: The provision of discretionary awards is a matter for local education authorities. A national survey of LEA discretionary awards—supported by the Department—is in progress. Early results show numbers of awards and total spending above the levels of three years previously.

School Repairs

18. **Mr. Hardy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his estimate of the capital spending required to ensure that all schools in England are brought into good repair and condition; and how much he expects will be spent on this purpose in the current year.

26. **Mr. Tony Banks:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his latest estimate of the amount needed to bring all schools in England to a satisfactory state of maintenance.

Mr. Forth: An estimate based on the 1986 survey of school buildings suggested that some £2 billion at 1990 prices was required to remedy deficiencies in school buildings. We estimate that over £4·5 billion will have been spent on schools in the years since, much of it in meeting the deficiencies identified. We forecast that about £760 million will be spent in the current year alone.

29. **Mr. Litherland:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what representations he has received from the Manchester Education Committee relating to the funding of school repairs; and what plans he has to visit the city in the near future.

Mr. Forth: My right hon. Friend has no plans to visit the city in the near future. I shall, however, be seeing a delegation from the education committee on 8 November to hear their concerns about the level of funding of school repairs.

A-levels

19. **Mr. David Nicholson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what representations he has had requesting that A-levels be abolished or diluted.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend receives a wide range of representations about GCE A-levels. GCE A-levels will remain a key part of our strategy to provide high-quality qualifications for students at 16 and beyond and we are committed to maintaining their standards and rigour. Considerable progress is also being made in implementing vocational A-levels.

Examination Results

20. **Mr. Illsley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will alter the regulations relating to the publication of examination results league tables to allow the inclusion of results of children who take examinations early.

Mr. Robin Squire: The results of pupils who took GCSE examinations earlier than usual will be included in this year's secondary school performance tables, provided that the pupils concerned were in the relevant age cohort and attending secondary schools in January 1993. The results of pupils who took GEC A-levels or AS examinations one year earlier than usual will also be included, in both the secondary school and the 16 to 18 performance tables.

National Funding

21. **Mr. Clifton-Brown:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what consideration he is giving to introduce a system of national funding for primary and secondary education.

Mr. Robin Squire: Within the resources available to them and the priorities they set, it is for each local education authority to determine the funding of the primary and secondary schools which it maintains. The Government are in the process of consulting on the gradual introduction of a common funding formula for self-governing—grant-maintained—schools from 1 April 1994.

Standard Spending Assessments

22. **Mr. William O'Brien:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what representations he has received over the effects of the standard spending assessments on the standard of education; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend has received a number of representations in the course of the current review of SSA methodology and he is considering these with care. The standard of education in any local education authority will depend, however, on a variety of factors, including the authority's own spending priorities.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what representations he has received concerning the current review of education standard spending assessments; what plans he has to change the criteria used when establishing education standard spending assessments; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Forth: My right hon. Friend has received various representations from local education authorities and others about the current review of education standard spending assessments. That review has been based on extensive statistical analyses. We shall weigh the evidence carefully before reaching final decisions and propose changes where the evidence strongly supports such changes.

Literacy and Basic Skills

25. **Sir Thomas Arnold:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make a statement about the new initiatives being undertaken by the adult literacy and basic skills unit.

Mr. Boswell: The adult literacy and basic skills Unit is currently developing a new family literacy initiative, for which my right hon. Friend has announced funding of £250,000 in the current financial year. Family literacy programmes will help parents with literacy difficulties to improve their own literacy skills and at the same time to support the development of their children's literacy skills.

National Curriculum

27. **Mrs. Roche:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what representations he has received concerning his latest proposals for English in the national curriculum.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend has received few such representations, since consultation on the proposals was carried out by the National Curriculum Council and responses were properly addressed to that body. NCC's report of the consultation was published last week by the new School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, the successor body to the NCC.

Book Prices

28. **Mr. Boyce:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the impact of a rise in the price of books on reading standards among children.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend lacks the basis on which to attempt such an estimate. There is no reliable evidence bearing on the relationship between book prices and the reading standards achieved by children.

Nursery Education

Ms Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many primary schools that have submitted proposals for grant-maintained status offer nursery provision; and what proportion this is of all applicants.

Mr. Robin Squire: Information is not readily available in the form requested. Some 20 of the current GM primary schools have designated nursery classes.

Student Loans

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education in how many student loans due for repayment the income level is below the threshold necessary for repayment.

Mr. Boswell: This is a matter for the Student Loans Company. I will ask the chief executive to write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what changes have been made in relation to repayment of student loans since their inception; in how many cases it has been necessary to take action to secure repayment; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Boswell: Standard repayment arrangements remain unchanged. The number of borrowers against whom the Student Loans Company has taken action is a matter for the company. I will ask the chief executive to write to the hon. Member.

Northern Ireland

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans exist for provision in the national curriculum for pupils in Great Britain to be given increased awareness of Northern Ireland matters.

Mr. Robin Squire: The implementation of the national curriculum for England and Wales is already providing for pupils to learn about the history and culture of Northern Ireland.

School Inspections

Ms Armstrong: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the *(a)* inspections carried out and *(b)* reports presented by (i) Her Majesty's inspectorate since January 1992 and (ii) Ofsted to date.

Mr. Robin Squire: The new Government Department Ofsted—the Office for Standards in Education—was created on 1 September 1992. All inspections carried out by HMI or reports published since that date are a matter for Ofsted. I have asked Professor Sutherland to write to the hon. Member.

Prior to 1 September 1992, HMI was a member of this Department. HMI undertook a variety of types of inspection visit to schools and other educational institutions. Not all of these inspections were planned to lead to published reports. In the period January to August 1992 HMI published over 180 reports. I have placed a copy of the list of these reports in the Library.

Single-sex Education

Sir Michael Neubert: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to increase the availability of single-sex education in the state sector.

Mr. Robin Squire: Responsibility for the provision of school places, including provision for single-sex education, lies with local education authorities and, from 1 April, the Funding Agency for Schools.

Fitzherbert School, Brighton

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education for what price the former Fitzherbert school site in Brighton has been sold.

Mr. Robin Squire: I understand from the CTC Trust, which is the beneficial owner of this site, that negotiations for its sale are continuing.

School Meals and Milk

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will publish a table showing net expenditure on school meals and milk in each year since 1978-79 in cash and constant prices.

Mr. Forth: The latest information on expenditure on school meals and milk by local education authorities in England is given in the table.

LEA expenditure on school meals and milk

(£ million)

Year	*Expenditure (Cash)*	*Expenditure (1992-93 prices)*
1979-80	422	1,012
1980-81	397	804
1981-82	396	732
1982-83	411	709
1983-84	426	702
1984-85	428	671
1985-86	436	649
1986-87	457	659
1987-88	443	605
1988-89	376	479
1989-90	379	453
1990-91	384	425
1991-92	407	421

Figures for 1978-79 are not readily available in the form requested.

Local Education Authorities

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many local education authority reorganisation proposals are presently being considered by his Department; and how many have been waiting for his decision *(a)* up to three months, *(b)* between three and six months, *(c)* between six and nine months, *(d)* between nine and 12 months and *(e)* in excess of 12 months.

Mr. Robin Squire: At 1 November, 107 proposals published under sections 12 and 13 of the Education Act 1980 were under consideration. Of these, 56 have been waiting a decision for up to three months, 32 for between three and six months, 11 for between six and nine months, two for between nine and 12 months and six for in excess of 12 months.

Among the reasons for delay is the need for greater information, consideration of an LEA's capital bid or the need to give simultaneous consideration to related GM applications.

Public Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Boswell: The Department does not normally fund capital projects on its own behalf. Borrowing approval or capital grant is made available to local authorities, schools, colleges and institutions of higher education.

The reply given by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Worcestershire (Mr. Forth) on 17 December 1992, *Official Report*, column *347*, to my right hon. Friend the Member for Tonbridge and Malling (Sir J. Stanley) set out the Department's role in supporting the introduction of private finance in schools, further and higher education. The Department is firmly committed to expanding the scope for the use of private finance in education and is currently exploring ways of doing so.

Funding

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will publish a table showing the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices for (i) the Further Education Funding Council, (ii) the Higher Education Funding Council and (iii) the Funding Agency for Schools.

Mr. Boswell: The figures requested for the bodies concerned are shown in the table:

	£ million 1992-93 prices		
	1993-94	*1994-95*	*1995-96*
Further Education Funding Council (FEFC)	2,630	2,699	2,792
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)	2,709	2,733	2,634
Funding Agency for Schools (FAS)		2,500	4,500

The figures for the FEFC and the HEFCE are for planned recurrent and capital grant to those councils, including provision for the councils' own running costs, as shown in the 1993 departmental report (Cm 2210), deflated to 1992-93 prices using the GDP deflators published in the March 1993 Budget statement. The HEFCE figures have been increased to take account of the shift from tuition fees to HEFCE grant in 1993-94.

The Funding Agency for Schools is to be established on 1 April 1994. The figures shown above are based on current assumptions about its further expenditure, which will be dependent on the numbers and size of self-governing—grant-maintained—schools and on the grant regime, which will be the subject of regulations. Part of the expenditure will be recouped from local education authorities. The figure include expenditure on the FAS's running costs.

SCOTLAND

Joy Riding

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many joy-riding road accidents have occurred in Scotland leading to *(a)* deaths and *(b)* injury in each of the past five years.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The information requested is not held centrally.

New Town Development Corporations

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing the total gross public spending for each year since 1987-88 and the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for the new town development corporations.

Mr. Stewart: The information is as follows:

	£ million
1987-88	155
1988-89	154
1989-90	171
1990-91	173
1991-92	137
1992-93	115
1993-94 plans	128
1994-95 plans	119
1995-96 plans	108

Higher Education

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests of the newly established Scottish Higher Education Funding Council.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The Scottish Higher Education Funding Council operates fully in accordance with the citizens charter ideals of openness, accessibility and accountability. The information requested is as follows:

(a) No.

(b) No. An outline of key decisions is issued to higher education institutions and other bodies following each council meeting. Proposals are issued in consultation papers, of which there have been 17 to date, and decisions in circular letters, of which there were 15 in 1992 and 55 so far in 1993.

(c) and *(d)* Yes. The council will publish an annual report and accounts as well as its corporate plan and operational plan.

(e) No. There is no formal register of members' interests. Biographical details of the membership were issued at the time of appointment and are given in a recent council bulletin—copies of which are available from the funding council.

Moated Grange Sites

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list the archaeological moated grange sites that are due to be lost because of planning permission approval being granted;

(2) if he will list for the last 10 years the archaeological moated grange sites that have been demolished.

Sir Hector Monro: The subject of the questions relates to matters undertaken by Historic Scotland. I have asked its chief executive, Mr Graeme Munro, to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Graeme N. Munro to Mr. Martin Redmond, dated 2 November 1993:

Sir Hector Monro MP, the Minister for Agriculture and Environment at The Scottish Office, has asked me to reply to your two recent Parliamentary Questions about archaeological moated grange sites.

You asked if the Secretary of State would list such sites that have been demolished in the last 10 years and that are due to be lost because of planning permission approval being granted. Moated granges are very rare in Scotland. Historic Scotland is not aware of any that have been demolished over the last 10 years nor of any which are due to be lost because of planning permission having been granted.

If you have concerns about specific moated sites in Scotland I would be pleased to know about them.

Woodland Access (Grants)

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what Government grants are available to encourage private woodland owners to provide public access to their land; how many such grants have been made in the past 10 years; and in respect of which pieces of land these grants have been made.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 26 October 1993]:* The community woodland supplement, which was introduced in 1991 as part of the woodland grant scheme, provides grants for the creation of new woodlands near towns and cities on condition that the woodlands are open for informal public recreation. A special management grant, which was also introduced in 1991 as part of the woodland grant scheme, is available for owners of existing woodlands of special environmental value where work is carried out to set up, maintain or improve facilities for public access or recreation.

The Forestry Commission has agreed to pay the community woodland supplement in over 250 cases, covering nearly 2,000 hectares of new woodland; special management grants, for access of recreation, have also been agreed for over 750 cases covering some 32,000 hectares. Detailed information on each of these areas could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Forestry

Mr. Morley: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will give the names of the consultants appointed by the forestry review group and their terms of reference; to whom they will report; how much they will cost; which Government Department is paying for the consultants; and what is the consultants' reporting timetable,

Sir Hector Monro [*holding answer 25 October 1993*]: The forestry review group has appointed three firms of consultants: Samuel Montagu and Co. Ltd., financial consultants, which is being assisted by Jaakko Poyry; John Clegg and Co., land agents; and Environmental Resources Management, environmental consultants. The terms of reference are confidential as they support the development of policy advice to Ministers. The costs will be paid by the Forestry Commission but the amount is commercially sensitive. The consultants will report on a timetable which will enable the review group to advise Ministers early next year.

Sheep

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the total loss of quota income suffered by sheep producers in Scotland as a result of the introduction of the new EC sheepmeat regime, showing the regional distribution of the income lost.

Sir Hector Monro [*holding answer 25 October 1993*]: As the rate of sheep annual premium for the 1993

marketing year, the first year in which the quota system operates, will not be finalised until early in 1994, I am unable to say whether there will be any drop in sheep producers' incomes.

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many sheep producers in Scotland have been deprived of sheep quota by the new EC sheepmeat regime.

Sir Hector Monro [*holding answer 25 October 1993*]: Until all the allocations of sheep annual premium quota have been completed, including those from the national reserve, I am not in a position to indicate whether any sheep producers in Scotland will receive no quota allocation.

Local Government Reorganisation

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many representations he has received on the proposal in the White Paper on reform of local government in Scotland to join Berwickshire to East Lothian; how many were received from people living in Berwickshire; and how many were in favour of the proposal and the number against.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 25 October 1993]*: Since the publication of the White Paper "Shaping the Future —The New Councils", 417 individual letters commenting on the proposal to create a new single-tier authority for Berwickshire and East Lothian have been received, of which 341 came from Berwickshire. About 1,850 postcards, pro forma letters and petition signatures have also been received from people objecting to the Government's proposals for Berwickshire.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations, in Berwickshire have had their views conveyed to him (i) in favour of his plan to detatch Berwickshire from the Borders local authority area, and (ii) against that proposal.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 29 October 1993]*: Since the publication of the White Paper "Shaping the Future —The New Councils", 341 individual letters opposing the proposal to create a new single-tier authority for Berwickshire and East Lothian have been received from Berwickshire. Three hundred and twenty letters have come from individuals and 21 from organisations. In addition, about 1,850 postcards, pro forma letters and petition signatures have been received from people objecting to the Government's proposals for Berwickshire.

Smoke Alarms

Sir David Steel: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations he has received on the subject of the compulsory installation of smoke alarms as a condition of the award of improvement grants for properties; and what plans he has to include the compulsory installation of smoke alarms by statutory instrument under the terms of section 244(8) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Letters have been received from Ettrick and Lauderdale district council and from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. Installation of smoke alarms as a condition of improvement grant would require legislation. The grant system is currently being reviewed by a working group on which local authorities are represented. It will be considering this issue along with other possible changes and will make recommendations next year.

Crime Statistics

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish the number of reported crimes in Scotland in each of the past 10 years involving *(a)* indecency, *(b)* violence, *(c)* dishonesty, *(d)* fire raising and violence, *(e)* theft of motor vehicles, *(f)* theft by opening lockfast places and *(g)* drugs.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Information is not collected centrally on the number of crimes reported to the police. Information on the number of crimes recorded by the police in Scotland for the categories of crime requested for each of the past five years is contained in the Scottish Office statistical bulletin "Recorded Crime in Scotland 1992", which was published on 21 April 1993. For earlier years information is contained in previous issues of the bulletin. Copies of the bulletins were placed in the House of Commons Library.

Boundary Commission

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the nature and timing of the information conveyed to the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Scotland about his proposals to alter local boundaries in Lothian and the Borders prior to his statement in the House on 8 July, *Official Report*, columns *471-87*.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to him on 20 July 1993 at column *192*, in which I stated that my right hon. Friend conveyed no such information to the Parliamentary Boundaries Commission prior to his statement to the House on 8 July.

EMPLOYMENT

Labour Statistics

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish a table showing in rank order the percentage of those people who are registered as unemployed who are aged 24 years or under according to the latest available figures in each travel-to-work area in England.

Miss Widdecombe: Unadjusted data on claimant unemployment levels in travel-to-work areas by age is available quarterly for the months of January, April, July and October and can be obtained from the NOMIS database in the Library.

Youth Training

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what percentage of young people on youth training places are expected to reach national vocational qualification level 2 by 1997; and what steps he intends to take to meet this target.

Miss Widdecombe: Forecasts of attainment of national vocational qualification level 2 in youth training and youth credits are published in the Department's annual report —Cm 2205—and currently extend up to 1995-96. Sixty per cent. of young people on YT or youth credits are expected to reach NVQ level 2 and above by 1995-96. The figure quoted includes level 1 for trainees endorsed as having special training needs. Progress towards this figure will be made by agreeing targets each year for the achievement of agreed outputs—mostly NVQs—with training and enterprise councils. TECs are paid between 25 per cent. and 40 per cent. of their YT funding on the basis of results achieved. The Department is piloting much higher levels of output funding—up to 100 per cent.—with some TECs to see whether this is effective in improving NVQ performance. The Government also intend that, by 1996, every 16 and 17-year-old leaving full-time education will have the offer of a youth credit. Youth credits represent an entitlement to train, generally to at least NVQ level 2 or equivalent.

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many youth training places meet national vocational qualification level 2; and what proportion this represents as a total of the number of training places.

Miss Widdecombe: All youth training places are required to offer trainees the opportunity to aim for a qualification at national vocational qualification level 2 or higher, unless the trainee has been endorsed as having special training needs.

Literacy

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what proportion of those receiving youth training are assessed as having serious problems with reading, writing and spelling.

Miss Widdecombe: Of those who left youth training in Great Britain in 1992-93, 1 per cent. had been assessed as having a severe literacy need. Over the same period, 27 per cent. of leavers had been assessed as having a special training need, which may have included problems with reading, writing and spelling.

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the contribution that improved literacy standards might make in reducing unemployment.

Miss Widdecombe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State recognises the importance of improved literacy standards in helping to reduce unemployment. The Government support the employer-led training and enterprise councils which assess locally what skills the labour market requires, including, where necessary, increased literacy standards for unemployed people to help them back in to work.

Early Retirements

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment (1) how many officials have applied for voluntary early retirement in *(a)* the Department of Employment and *(b)* the Health and Safety Executive in 1993-94; and what is the quota who will be granted early retirement in 1993-94;

(2) what effect the number of officials taking early retirement will have on the number of officials newly recruited to *(a)* the Department of Employment and *(b)* the Health and Safety Executive.

Miss Widdecombe: A total of 250 members of staff in the Employment Department group have so far applied for voluntary early retirement in 1993-94. A further 1,465 staff have expressed an interest and others are expected to apply.

Separate figures are not currently available for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The quota for voluntary early retirement releases in 1993-94 is 1,174.

The number of officials taking early retirement relates to the number of surplus staff in the Department. There is no direct effect on the number of officials newly recruited to the Department or to the HSE. But in general there is no significant recruitment taking place at grades or in parts of the country where there are significant surpluses.

Unemployment Benefits

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what proportion of those receiving unemployment benefits have no educational qualifications; and what was the cost to the Exchequer of this group in the latest available year.

Miss Widdecombe: Information on qualifications of unemployed people is not available from the claimant count. Results from the spring 1993 labour force survey —not seasonally adjusted—show that 34 per cent. of people claiming unemployment-related benefits have no qualifications.

It is not possible to calculate the exact cost to the Exchequer of the group who are unemployed with no qualifications given that it is not possible to distinguish exactly what benefits the group receives. However, using the estimated total expenditure on benefits to the unemployed in the 1992-93 financial year, it can be calculated that the cost of the unemployed to the Exchequer is £3,300 per person per year.

Civil Service (Early Retirement)

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the expected cost of the scheme in the Department of Employment for voluntary early retirement for civil servants aged 50 years and over *(a)* in 1993-94 and *(b)* in subsequent years; and how this scheme is being funded within the overall public expenditure totals for those years.

Miss Widdecombe: The cost of running voluntary early retirement schemes for civil servants aged 50 and over in the Employment Department group during 1993-94 is expected to be about £17 million. If the quota for whom provision has been made retire during 1993-94, the subsequent cost for 1994-95 and 1995-96 is expected to be £8·5 million. The scheme is funded from within the Department's running costs provision, which is subject to normal overall public expenditure controls.

Investors in People

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list for each training and enterprise council area the number of organisations which have received the Investors in People award.

Miss Widdecombe: The number of Investors in People awards at 29 October by TEC area is as follows:

	Number
Avon	9
AZTEC	6
Barnsley and Doncaster	4
Bedfordshire	8
Birmingham	8
Bolton/Bury	4
Bradford	2
CAMBSTEC	2
CEWTEC	8
CILNTEC	1
Calderdale and Kirklees	1
Central England	9
CENTEC	4
County Durham	7
Coventry and Warwickshire	5
Cumbria	2
Devon and Cornwall	22
Dorset	12
Dudley	1
ELTEC	8
Essex	5
Gloucestershire	24
Greater Nottingham	2
Greater Peterborough	1
Gwent	7
HAWTEC	5
Hampshire	13
Heart of England	9
Hertfordshire	1
Humberside	7
Kent	2
LAWTEC	2
Leeds	7
Lincolnshire	1
London East	2
METROTEC	5
Manchester	4
Merseyside	7
Mid Glamorgan	6
Milton Keynes	1
NORMIDTEC	4
Norfolk and Waveney	8
North Derbyshire	5
North East Wales	2
North London	1
North Nottinghamshire	6
North West London	2
North West Wales	5
North Yorkshire	8
Northamptonshire	5
Northumberland	5
Powys	1
Rochdale	1
Rotherham	4
SOLOTEC	1
Sandwell	1
Sheffield	3
Shropshire	4
Somerset	3
South and East Cheshire	8
South Glamorgan	6
South Thames	1
Southern Derbyshire	9
Staffordshire	4
Suffolk	4
Surrey	4
Sussex	6
Teesside	7
Thames Valley Enterprise	20
Tyneside	12
Wakefield	2
Walsall	2
Wearside	2
West London	1
West Wales	6
Wiltshire	7
Wolverhampton	3

Redundant Mineworkers

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how much of the unclaimed European Community social fund moneys is allocated to south Yorkshire regardless of local authority contributions; and how much of it is planned to be spent on retraining or other projects involving redundant mineworkers.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: My officials are writing to local European social fund co-ordinators to invite further applications for support from the ESF to take up additional resources arising from exchange rate fluctuations. Projects will be selected on the basis of established selection criteria, including value for money considerations. The exact amount of additional money in south Yorkshire will depend on the outcome of the selection process in the various operational programmes concerned.

Earnings Statistics

Mr. Prescott: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish tables showing the proportion of (1) full-time employees earning less than *(a)* £215·50, *(b)* £203·07 and *(c)* £152·30 per week, (2) part-time employees earning less than *(x)* £5·75, *(y)* £5·42 and *(z)* £4·05 per hour, excluding overtime payments, for (i) Great Britain as a whole, (ii) each county in England, (iii) each county in Wales, (iv) each London borough and Greater London as a whole and (v) each regional authority and borough in Scotland.

Miss Widdecombe: The information available from the "New Earnings Survey" is provided in the following tables:

Full time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence: proportion with gross weekly earnings below the following amounts: at April 1993

Per cent	*£152·30*	*£203·07*	*£215·50*
GREAT BRITAIN	9·8	26·7	31·1
South East Region	5·8	18·2	21·7
Bedfordshire	7·4	21·8	25·4
Berkshire	4·3	16·5	19·6
Buckinghamshire	7·1	23·0	27·4
East Sussex	11·2	33·3	38·1
Essex	9·0	25·9	31·0
Hampshire	8·5	25·1	29·6
Hertfordshire	5·9	21·2	24·7
Isle of Wight	15·4	35·1	40·4
Kent	9·1	26·0	31·1
Oxfordshire	7·1	24·6	28·3
Surrey	5·2	17·1	20·6
West Sussex	7·9	25·6	29·6
East Anglia Region	11·2	30·1	34·9
Cambridgeshire	8·9	26·3	30·8
Norfolk	12·2	31·5	36·5
Suffolk	12·8	33·0	38·0
South West Region	10·7	30·8	35·6
Avon	8·2	25·7	29·9
Cornwall	20·7	44·1	50·1
Devon	13·9	36·0	41·8
Dorset	10·5	33·3	37·9
Gloucestershire	8·8	27·9	33·3
Somerset	12·6	34·0	37·1
Wiltshire	6·7	25·4	29·7
West Midlands Region	11·6	30·8	35·7
West Midlands MC	10·2	27·5	32·5
Hereford and Worcester	13·7	34·8	40·1
Shropshire	15·5	36·8	41·7
Staffordshire	13·3	36·4	41·5
Warwickshire	11·3	29·6	33·2
East Midlands Region	12·5	31·7	36·6
Derbyshire	11·4	29·2	33·8
Leicestershire	12·6	31·1	36·6
Lincolnshire	15·5	36·5	41·4
Northamptonshire	8·3	27·9	32·0
Nottinghamshire	14·6	34·2	39·6
Yorkshire and Humberside Region	11·9	31·1	35·8
South Yorkshire MC	11·6	28·8	32·9
West Yorkshire MC	11·0	31·1	36·4
Humberside	13·2	32·7	36·6
North Yorkshire	13·9	33·5	38·5
North West Region	11·6	30·1	35·1
Greater Manchester MC	11·3	30·7	35·6
Merseyside MC	11·1	28·1	34·1
Cheshire	10·3	26·0	30·0
Lancashire	13·9	34·4	39·3
North Region	12·9	30·9	35·7
Tyne and Wear MC	12·3	29·9	35·2
Cleveland	13·0	28·7	33·1
Cumbria	12·2	27·7	31·8
Durham	14·2	35·1	40·1
Northumberland	14·0	37·1	41·8
Wales	13·2	33·6	38·4
Clwyd	13·6	32·1	36·0
Clwyd-West	15·6	37·9	40·6
Clwyd-East	12·7	29·3	33·9
Dyfed (excluding Llanelli)	16·9	38·2	43·0
Gwent	13·9	32·9	38·4
Gwynedd	18·2	39·1	42·6
Mid-Glamorgan	15·1	37·9	43·5
Powys	15·0	36·1	41·1
South Glamorgan	8·8	27·8	33·7
West Glamorgan (including Llanelli)	11·4	33·5	37·1
Greater London	3·7	12·0	14·8
City of London	1·1	4·3	5·6
Barking	3·7	10·1	13·9
Barnet	6·0	20·3	23·9
Bexley	4·0	16·8	22·5
Brent	3·6	16·8	20·7
Bromley	9·0	25·0	28·4
Camden	3·1	11·0	13·1
Croydon	6·5	16·7	20·9
Ealing	4·5	13·8	18·2
Enfield	3·9	14·3	18·5
Greenwich	4·2	16·2	22·3
Hackney	..	..	..
Hammersmith	3·0	9·8	12·4
Haringey	7·4	15·6	18·5
Harrow	4·8	18·5	22·1
Havering	8·5	21·0	23·4
Hillingdon	1·8	9·2	11·4
Hounslow	3·1	12·4	14·6
Islington	2·5	6·4	8·0
Kensington and Chelsea	5·8	17·6	22·3
Kingston-upon-Thames	5·4	16·5	21·0
Lambeth	2·6	9·4	12·0
Lewisham	5·0	17·0	18·1
Merton	6·0	17·0	20·9
Newham	2·7	11·4	13·5
Redbridge	6·9	21·1	25·8
Richmond-upon-Thames	4·8	16·7	20·7
Southwark	2·3	8·7	9·8
Sutton	5·6	16·5	21·2
Tower Hamlets	2·4	6·2	7·6
Waltham Forest	8·7	23·0	29·0
Wandsworth	3·6	13·3	16·7
City of Westminster	3·0	9·7	12·6
Scotland	11·7	31·0	36·2
Borders	23·4	45·4	51·5
Central	13·3	30·0	33·9
Dumfries and Galloway	16·4	36·2	39·9
Fife	15·2	33·3	38·3
Grampian	9·9	26·8	31·4
Highland	14·1	38·0	47·2
Lothian	9·1	29·0	33·5
Strathclyde	11·5	30·5	36·1
Tayside	12·6	34·9	40·7
Orkney and Shetland, Western Isles	—	—	—
Highlands and Islands	13·4	36·1	43·3

Part time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence: proportion with gross hourly earnings excluding overtime below the following amounts: at April 1993

Per cent	*£4·05*	*£5·42*	*£5·75*
GREAT BRITAIN	38·3	59·0	62·1
South East Region	28·2	51·3	54·8
Bedfordshire	41·3	60·2	63·7
Berkshire	—	—	—
Buckinghamshire	27·1	48·8	53·9
East Sussex	36·8	61·2	63·3
Essex	36·8	59·2	61·6
Hampshire	40·0	58·5	63·3
Hertfordshire	28·3	56·6	59·2
Isle of Wight	—	—	—
Kent	35·6	57·7	61·0
Oxfordshire	34·4	54·2	56·2
Surrey	23·5	47·1	52·1
West Sussex	27·2	45·1	48·3
East Anglia Region	34·5	52·1	54·8
Cambridgeshire	33·0	51·8	55·7
Norfolk	33·8	51·4	54·0
Suffolk	36·7	53·1	54·7
South West Region	41·9	61·8	64·2

Per cent	£4·05	£5·42	£5·75
Avon	43·0	62·0	64·8
Cornwall	45·4	56·7	60·6
Devon	41·3	61·9	63·2
Dorset	44·8	64·3	65·8
Gloucestershire	—	—	—
Somerset	42·3	67·1	68·7
Wiltshire	36·0	62·4	64·9
West Midlands Region	42·8	62·9	65·7
West Midlands MC	40·6	62·7	65·5
Hereford and Worcester	44·4	61·0	64·2
Shropshire	43·5	58·7	61·5
Staffordshire	47·2	67·2	69·7
Warwickshire	44·5	63·1	65·1
East Midlands Region	41·6	61·8	64·4
Derbyshire	39·7	57·8	60·6
Leicestershire	40·1	62·6	65·0
Lincolnshire	40·9	58·4	60·8
Northamptonshire	41·9	63·7	66·3
Nottinghamshire	45·5	66·4	69·1
Yorkshire and Humberside Region	43·8	65·6	69·2
South Yorkshire MC	47·6	69·6	72·8
West Yorkshire MC	43·1	64·5	68·4
Humberside	44·6	66·4	69·5
North Yorkshire	38·0	60·5	64·8
North West Region	42·8	63·6	66·5
Greater Manchester MC	42·7	65·0	67·5
Merseyside MC	45·6	65·2	68·6
Cheshire	38·6	59·3	62·7
Lancashire	43·4	62·5	65·6
North Region	47·3	66·4	69·6
Tyne and Wear MC	46·0	66·9	70·5
Cleveland	45·9	62·0	65·6
Cumbria	44·8	65·2	69·1
Durham	51·0	66·7	69·5
Northumberland	52·5	72·9	73·7
Wales	45·2	61·4	64·1
Clwyd	41·1	53·4	57·2
Clwyd-West	—	—	—
Clwyd-East	44·0	57·4	59·8
Dyfed (ex. Llanelli)	36·0	48·0	52·0
Gwent	41·5	62·5	65·1
Gwynedd	40·4	53·5	54·7
Mid-Glamorgan	56·6	70·9	72·7
Powys	—	—	—
South Glamorgan	46·6	68·8	71·5
West Glamorgan (inc. Llanelli)	44·0	58·6	62·5
Greater London	18·6	43·3	46·7
City of London	—	—	—
Barking	—	—	—
Barnet	—	—	—
Bexley	—	—	—
Brent	—	—	—
Bromley	—	—	—
Camden	—	—	—
Croydon	—	—	—
Ealing	—	—	—
Enfield	20·9	49·1	50·8
Greenwich	—	—	—
Hackney	—	—	—
Hammersmith	—	—	—
Haringey	—	—	—
Harrow	—	—	—
Havering	—	—	—
Hillingdon	17·0	43·0	45·5
Hounslow	—	—	—
Islington	—	—	—
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—
Kingston upon Thames	16·8	51·6	53·9
Lambeth	—	—	—
Lewisham	—	—	—
Merton	—	—	—
Newham	—	—	—
Redbridge	26·5	48·9	51·0
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	—
Southwark	—	—	—
Sutton	—	—	—
Tower Hamlets	—	—	—
Waltham Forest	29·2	60·9	65·8
Wandsworth	21·1	42·3	45·1
City of Westminster	—	—	—
Scotland	42·8	61·5	64·6
Borders	—	—	—
Central	39·7	59·5	61·6
Dumfries and Galloway	—	—	—
Fife	46·2	62·8	65·1
Grampian	48·4	62·7	64·0
Highland	40·9	52·7	55·4
Lothian	42·3	61·3	65·7
Strathclyde	42·5	63·4	67·3
Tayside	41·9	58·9	60·8
Orkney, Shetland, Western Isles	—	—	—
Highlands and Islands	37·4	50·3	52·9

"—" denotes sample number too small or standard error too large for reliable estimate.

Source: New Earnings Survey.

Mr. Prescott: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many adult *(a)* male and *(b)* female part-time workers there were in Great Britain in April; and what is the proportion of those workers whose earnings, excluding overtime, fell below (i) £5·75 per hour, (ii) £5·42 per hour and (iii) £4·05 per hour.

Miss Widdecombe: In March 1993 there were 1,113,000 male part-time and 4,680,000 female part-time employees in employment in Great Britain.

The information requested showing estimates of the distribution of earnings of those employees at April is as follows:

Part-time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence: proportion with gross hourly earnings excluding overtime below the following amounts: at April 1993

Per cent	£4·05	£5·42	£5·75
Great Britain			
Men	31·0	44·6	46·4
Women	39·4	61·3	64·6

Source: New Earnings Survey and Short Term Employment Statistics.

Mr. Prescott: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish tables showing the proportions of manual, non-manual and all full-time employees earning less than *(a)* £215·50 per week, *(b)* £203·07 per week and *(c)* £152·30 per week, excluding overtime payments, for (i) men, (ii) women and (iii) both sexes, by standard economic region, for Great Britain as a whole and for Northern Ireland.

Miss Widdecombe: The information available from the "New Earnings Survey" is provided in the following tables:

Full-time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence: proportion with gross weekly earnings excluding overtime below the following amounts: at April 1993

Per cent.

	£152·30	£203·07	£215·50
Manual men			
Great Britain	11·8	38·1	43·4
South East	8·6	30·0	36·1

	£152·30	£203·07	£215·50
East Anglia	11·4	41·7	49·2
South West	12·9	42·7	50·5
West Midlands	12·3	40·0	47·6
East Midlands	13·5	41·5	48·7
Yorkshire and Humberside	13·2	41·3	48·8
North West	12·1	38·9	47·0
North	13·3	36·1	44·4
Scotland	12·5	42·5	50·3
Wales	16·1	43·8	50·9
Northern Ireland[1]	19·0	45·0	51·0
Non-manual men			
Great Britain	4·4	13·5	16·1
South East	2·7	9·4	11·4
East Anglia	4·6	14·9	17·2
South West	4·4	15·3	18·2
West Midlands	5·5	15·8	19·0
East Midlands	5·6	16·8	19·8
Yorkshire and Humberside	6·0	17·4	20·7
North West	5·8	16·5	19·2
North	5·0	14·4	17·8
Scotland	5·2	15·3	18·4
Wales	6·5	17·6	20·3
Northern Ireland[1]	8·0	18·0	20·0
All men			
Great Britain	7·7	24·6	29·3
South East	4·8	16·6	20·0
East Anglia	8·1	28·5	33·4
South West	8·1	27·4	32·4
West Midlands	9·0	28·1	33·6
East Midlands	9·8	29·9	35·1
Yorkshire and Humberside	9·7	29·7	35·1
North West	8·8	27·1	32·4
North	9·5	26·3	32·4
Scotland	8·7	28·5	33·9
Wales	11·6	31·5	36·5
Northern Ireland[1]	14·0	31·0	36·0
Manual women			
Great Britain	47·6	79·7	84·4
South East	36·4	70·3	74·8
East Anglia	53·2	84·7	89·6
South West	53·3	86·0	89·8
West Midlands	50·1	82·1	86·7
East Midlands	55·1	87·6	91·6
Yorkshire and Humberside	54·3	84·1	88·3
North West	51·9	81·1	86·7
North	50·7	80·4	85·2
Scotland	48·6	80·3	86·3
Wales	47·5	82·7	87·9
Northern Ireland[1]	63·0	87·0	90·0
Non-manual women			
Great Britain	13·2	37·1	43·3
South East	6·5	23·4	28·5
East Anglia	17·4	46·0	52·4
South West	15·4	45·0	51·5
West Midlands	17·5	45·9	51·9
East Midlands	18·2	46·7	53·7
Yorkshire and Humberside	18·0	45·6	52·0
North West	15·9	43·6	50·6
North	19·9	49·6	56·4
Scotland	16·9	44·1	51·4
Wales	17·2	44·4	51·7
Northern Ireland[1]	21·0	44·0	48·0
All women			
Great Britain	19·2	44·7	50·5
South East	10·4	29·6	34·6
East Anglia	24·4	53·5	59·6
South West	21·4	51·5	57·6
West Midlands	24·5	53·7	59·4
East Midlands	28·0	57·5	63·7
Yorkshire and Humberside	25·1	53·1	59·1
North West	22·4	50·3	57·1
North	26·5	56·2	62·5
Scotland	23·2	51·3	58·4
Wales	23·7	52·6	59·4
Northern Ireland[1]	31·0	54·0	58·0
Manual employees			
Great Britain	18·3	45·7	52·5
South East	13·9	37·6	43·4
East Anglia	18·4	48·9	55·9
South West	19·7	50·0	57·2
West Midlands	19·1	47·6	54·7
East Midlands	21·6	50·5	57·1
Yorkshire and Humberside	19·9	48·3	55·3
North West	19·3	46·5	54·2
North	19·7	43·6	51·3
Scotland	19·7	50·1	57·5
Wales	21·8	50·9	57·6
Northern Ireland[1]	29·0	54·0	60·0
Non-manual employees			
Great Britain	8·4	24·4	28·6
South East	4·4	15·8	19·1
East Anglia	10·5	29·3	33·5
South West	9·5	28·9	33·5
West Midlands	11·0	29·6	34·0
East Midlands	11·0	29·7	34·5
Yorkshire and Humberside	11·5	30·3	35·0
North West	10·6	29·4	34·1
North	12·1	31·2	36·2
Scotland	10·8	29·3	34·5
Wales	11·6	30·4	35·3
Northern Ireland[1]	14·0	31·0	34·0
All employees			
Great Britain	11·9	31·8	37·0
South East	6·9	21·6	25·6
East Anglia	13·7	37·1	42·4
South West	12·9	36·1	41·5
West Midlands	14·3	36·9	42·5
East Midlands	15·7	38·9	44·5
Yorkshire and Humberside	14·9	37·6	43·2
North West	13·8	35·6	41·4
North	15·4	36·5	42·7
Scotland	14·2	37·1	43·2
Wales	15·9	39·0	44·6
Northern Ireland[1]	20·0	40·0	44·0

[1] Information is at April 1992 and inclusive of overtime.

Source: New Earnings Survey, Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Training and Enterprise Councils

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish a table showing the total gross public spending for each year since 1991-92 and the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for training and enterprise councils.

Miss Widdecombe: Provisional gross expenditure on programmes delivered through training and enterprise councils in England and Wales and local enterprise companies in Scotland for each year since 1991-92 and projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96 in 1992-93 prices are as follows:

£ million

	Number
1991-92	2,253
1992-93	2,247
1993-94	2,300
1994-95	2,164
1995-96	2,108

Notes:

1. The total for 1992-93 is the estimated outturn.
2. The totals for 1993-94 onwards are from the latest plans.

3. Running costs for LECs are not included.
4. 1992-93 prices calculated by using GDP deflators as published in the March 1993 Budget.
5. European Social Fund allocations for 1994-95 and 1995-96 are not yet known.

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish a table showing whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests of training and enterprise councils.

Miss Widdecombe: The Companies Acts require the accounts of training and enterprise councils be lodged with Companies House where they may be examined by the public. The contract with TECs requires that they make publicly available their corporate plans, hold an annual public meeting and publish an annual report and audited statement of accounts. TECs are private companies and access to their meetings and to their registers of members' interests is a matter for the directors.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish a table showing for each of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department, whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The following executive non-departmental public bodies are sponsored by the Department:

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
Commissioner for the Rights of Trade Union Members
Construction Industry Training Board
Engineering Construction Industry Training Board
Equal Opportunities Commission
Health and Safety Commission
Health and Safety Executive
National Council for Vocational Qualifications
Remploy Ltd.
Investors in People

With the exception of the special arrangements which exist in relation to the Health and Safety Commission and Executive, all are responsible to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State. The Health and Safety Commission is responsible to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and other Secretaries of State which have relevant interests, and the Health and Safety Executive is responsible to the Commission.

The public does not have a statutory right to attend board or committee meetings or inspect the minutes for any of the organisations listed above.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, Commissioner for the Rights of Trade Union Members, Equal Opportunities Commission, Health and Safety Commission and Health and Safety Executive are required by statute to produce and lay before both Houses of Parliament copies of their annual reports and account. These are then made available in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

Remploy is also required by statue to copy its annual report and accounts to the Registrar of Companies and these may be examined by the public at Companies House.

Although not required by statute, the annual report and accounts for the National Council for Vocational Qualifications and the annual accounts for Investors in People United Kingdom are published and copies made available in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

With the exception of Remploy Ltd,—where a register of directors interests is available for inspection at its registered office—the public do not have a statutory right to inspect a register of members' interests for any of the organisations listed above. In the case of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, no such register exists.

HEALTH

Health Care

Mr. Pawsey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the share of gross domestic product devoted in 1992 to health care in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Sackville: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, Moorlands (Sir D. Knox) on 26 October at column *600*.

NHS Beds

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what were the total numbers of beds and private beds in NHS hospitals by region and nationally for each of the last 10 years.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 20 April at columns *77-78*. More recent information is not yet available.

Community Care

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to relax in 1994-95 the requirement relating to the proportion of the community care special transitional grant which must be spent in the independent sector; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: The conditions to be applied to the 1994-95 special transitional grant will be announced in due course.

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to establish a special grant to fund the cost of additional care managers, information systems and other unavoidable expenses incurred by local authorities resulting from the institution of community care.

Mr. Bowis: No.

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what sum will be available to fund care in the community in *(a)* 1993-94 and *(b)* 1994-95.

Mr. Bowis: In 1993-94 local authorities will receive an additional £565·4 million to fund their new responsibilities. This will rise to a total of £1,274·5 million in 1994-95, of which £735·9 million will be included in a special transitional grant.

"Changing Childbirth"

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she plans to take to implement the recommendations of the expert maternity group report on "Changing Childbirth".

Mr. Sackville: The report "Changing Childbirth", copies of which are available in the Library, has been the subject of consultation which ended on 29 October. Professional bodies, interested organisations and the national health service were invited to submit written comments. These are being given careful consideration in the Department. Action to be taken in the NHS will be notified as soon as Ministers have completed their study of the responses to the report.

Patients (Costs)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the most recent available average cost of *(a)* an in-patient, *(b)* an out-patient and *(c)* an accident emergency episode of treatment in England.

Mr. Sackville: Information for 1991-92 is shown in the table. The figures are not comparable with data from financial returns, for earlier years due to the inclusion of capital charges and overheads.

Average cost of in-patient, out-patient and accident and emergency services 1991-92, England

	Average costs (£)
In-patient[1] per episode	1,234
Out-patient[2] per attendance	54
Accident and emergency[3] per attendance	35

[1] Patients using a bed including day cases.
[2] Figure obtained by using total attendance data.
[3] Total attendance of patients using accident and emergency services.

Source: Specialty and Programme Cost Return HFR22/TFR2

NHS Accommodation, Leeds

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the location of NHS office accommodation in Leeds based outside hospitals and the date when the accommodation was first occupied for NHS use.

Mr. Sackville: The location of national health service office accommodation in Leeds, based outside hospitals, is shown in the table. If the hon. Member requires further information on any of these, he should contact the organisation involved.

NHS Organisation	*Location*	*Year of occupancy*
United Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	Joseph's Well Complex Hanover Walk Leeds LS3 1AB	1992
Leeds Family Health Services Association	Brunswick Court Bridge Street Leeds LS2 7RJ	1991
Leeds Healthcare	St. Mary's House St. Mary's Road Leeds LS7 3JX	1979
Leeds Community Health Council	Vicar Lane House Templar Street Leeds LS2 7NU	1991

Special Transitional Grant

Ms Jowell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which London local authorities are forecasting an overspend on special transitional grant; and how she intends to adjust the formula for distribution of special transitional grant in 1994-95.

Mr. Bowis: Information provided by local authorities to joint monitoring teams from the social services inspectorate and regional health authorities indicates that in September some authorities in London were predicting that they would spend the full amount of their special transitional grant, some less and some more. This information was sought on the understanding that it would only be published in aggregate. The distribution of next year's special transitional grant will be announced in due course.

Secure Units, London

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the number of secure units for young people in the areas covering the Greater London area.

Mr. Bowis: There is a national network of 295 secure places to which all local authorities have access. London boroughs provide 41 of these places—11 for girls and 30 for boys—in five separate secure units.

Nursing Homes

Ms Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many privately operated nursing homes for the elderly have been closed down under the individual voluntary arrangement procedure provisions of the Insolvency Act 1986 in each year since 1986; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

VAT (Domestic Fuel)

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department has conducted any survey or analysis of the cost or other implications to the NHS of the proposed increase in VAT on gas and electricity.

Mr. Sackville: The non-domestic supply of fuel and power, including that to hospitals, is already subject to value added tax at the standard rate.

Hospital Services

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what new services have been provided in hospitals and community health services as a result of increased funding in the last three years.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 29 October at columns *833-34*.

NHS Trusts

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what were the total salaries of each chief executive of each trust in the years 1991-92, 1992-93 and planned for 1993-94;

(2) how many chief executives of national health service trusts have merit awards according to the actual grade of merit award;

(3) how many chief executives of trusts are qualified medical doctors.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will set out the guidelines established for national health service trusts in relation to the disposal of property and land.

Mr. Sackville: National health service trusts, like other public sector bodies, follow agreed Government procedures for the disposal of surplus public land. They are required to consider with their professional advisors how to obtain the best return, which will normally be achieved through a sale of the freehold on the open market, with the benefit of planning permission where there is potential for development. The Department is preparing guidance for national health service trusts on property management which will include advice on disposals.

Contraceptive Pills

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to investigate deregulation and over-the-counter provision of non-emergency contraceptive pills.

Mr. Sackville: The proposal that non-emergency contraceptive pills should be available from pharmacies without a prescription was made in an editorial in the *Lancet* on 4 September and has been the subject of some media debate. The proposal and reactions to it are being studied in the Department.

Perioperative Deaths

Mr. Batiste: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what is the national average perioperative death rate;

(2) what is the perioperative death rate at the Harrogate district hospital; and if she will make a statement;

(3) what was the result of her Department's contacts with individual hospitals with high perioperative death rates;

(4) at which hospital in the United Kingdom the perioperative death rate is the lowest; and what is this rate.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health does not collect information on hospital perioperative death rates. The royal colleges encourage clinicians to participate in a national confidential inquiry into hospital perioperative deaths. The results of the inquiry are published in an annual report, copies of which are available in the Library, but the identity of individual hospitals and surgeons remain confidential.

Night Visits

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many out-of-hours visits that command a night visit fee for general practitioners took place in each of the last 10 years.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is shown in the table.

Financial year	*Number of visits*
1983-84	682,000
1984-85	715,000
1985-86	798,000
1986-87	763,000
1987-88	825,000
1988-89	902,000
1989-90	936,000
1990-91	1,543,000
1991-92	1,712,000
1992-93	1,643,000

Notes:

1. In 1990-91, the period for which night visit fees are payable was extended from 11pm-7am to 10pm-8am.
2. The number of general practitioners increased over this period from 23,640 in 1983 to 25,968 in 1992 (the last year for which figures are available).
3. The figure for 1992-93 is provisional, unaudited.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the night visit fee for general practitioners in real terms in each of the last 10 years.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is shown in the table.

Night visit fee in real terms (in £ at 1993/94 prices)	*Year beginning 1 April*
46.65 (higher); 15.55 (lower)	1993
46.24 (higher); 15.41 (lower)	1992
47.86 (higher); 15.95 (lower)	1991
49.17 (higher); 16.39 (lower)	[1]1990
24.81	1989
24.48	1988
24.09	1987
23.79	1986
23.72	1985
23.65	1984

[1] On 1 April 1990, the "new" general practitioner contract restructured the arrangements for the payment of night visit fees. A two-tier fee system was introduced under which GPs undertaking their own visits or providing cover within a rota of 10 GPs or less qualified for the higher fee, other visits qualified for the lower fee. Figures before 1990 are not, therefore, directly comparable with figures after 1990.

Foster Children

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the number of children by age in each year since 1989 *(a)* in foster care and *(b)* adopted; and what was the time spent in foster care by age prior to adoption in each of those years.

Mr. Bowis: The number of children in local authority care in foster placements by age at 31 March is published in "Children in care, 31 March, England" for the years 1989 to 1991. Figures for 1992 are not yet available at this level of detail. Information about the number of children adopted by age is published in "Marriage and Divorce statistics series FM2, year ending October". Copies of both publications are available in the Library.

Information about the length of placement has only been collected following the implementation of the Children Act 1989. I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 17 June at column. *688* for the information that is currently available.

Private GPs

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will outline rights private general practitioners have in referring to NHS hospitals.

Dr. Mawhinney: All fully registered medical practitioners can refer patients to national health service hospitals irrespective of whether they are treating them privately or under the NHS. The priority afforded to referrals from a private general practitioner, as with those from an NHS GP, is a matter for clinical decision.

Nurse Training

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she has on health authorities' and regional health authorities' contracts for basic nursing training colleges in each of the last five years and on projected figures for the coming year in real terms and on a percentage change.

Mr. Sackville: Contractual arrangements for nurse training colleges are a matter between regional health authorities and the colleges themselves.

The demand for basic nurse training places has been employment led since 1991. Employers are focusing their attention on quality and outcomes of care rather than numbers employed within staff groups.

Pharmacists

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the packaging reimbursement to pharmacists per prescribed item.

Dr. Mawhinney: Pharmacists currently receive 6·5p per prescription for the cost of containers.

London Specialty Review

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to respond to the specialty review of London health services; and when she plans to respond.

Dr. Mawhinney: The recommendation of the six specialty reviews is part of a complex jigsaw of factors informing the development of proposals for the future configuration of London's hospital services. Proposals for the future pattern of services, including specialist services, will be put forward shortly.

Cancer Clusters

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health by whom her Department was represented at the conference on cancer clusters, organised by the European Commission, held in early October at the Westlakes research institute in Cumbria.

Mr. Sackville: Two officials from the Department's health aspects of the environment and food division attended.

NHS Management

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to add the functions of the NHS estates to those of the NHS management executive; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: National Health Service Estates is an executive agency in the Department of Health and carries out a number of functions on behalf of the Department including the NHS management executive. The agency's future role and functions are currently being examined in the light of the functions and manpower review, and the first triennial review of the agency's framework document.

Private Capital Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list those public investment projects within her Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Sackville: The private finance initiative is helping the national health service to capture the skills and expertise of the private sector to give better services, higher quality and more resources for the NHS. Private finance will mean additional capital spending on top of the record £2·1 billion public capital this year. New delegated limits for the NHS have broken down bureaucratic obstacles that were inhibiting effective use of private finance. Twelve projects have been approved by the Department of Health since the 1992 autumn statement, as shown in the table. Health authorities and NHS trusts now have authority to approve other projects themselves where the sums involved are less than certain prescribed limits; as a result many further projects are also under discussion.

NHS projects using private capital approved by the Department of Health since the 1992 autumn statement

1. Newcastle Royal Victoria Infirmary NHS Trust: lease of magnetic resonance imager.
2. Standing Committee on Postgraduate Medical Education: lease of offices in London.
3. South East London Commissioning Agency: lease of offices in London.
4. King's College Hospital, Camberwell: new clinical waste incineration facilities.
5. The Royal Oldham Hospital NHS Trust: new clinical waste incineration facilities.
6. Royal Liverpool University Hospital NHS Trust: joint venture patient hotel.
7. Plymouth District Health Authority: new clinical waste incineration facilities.
8. William Harvey Hospital, Ashford, Kent: new clinical waste incineration facilities.
9. North West Thames Regional Health Authority: provision under contract of new residential accommodation at Steppingley and Biggleswade, Bedfordshire.
10. Barnet Health Authority: provision under contract of new residential accommodation in Hendon.
11. Bolton DHA: new clinical waste incineration facilities.
12. North West Thames RHA: staff residences at Carlton gate, London W9.

Ealing Hospital

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the number of *(a)* medical, *(b)* nursing and *(c)* administrative and other staff at Ealing hospital for the current year and for each of the past 10 years; how many in-patients and out-patients they tended in each of these years; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The information available is shown in the table:

Staff at Ealing hospital, by staff group

	September 1991	*September 1992*
Medical	—	110
Nursing	640	610
Administrative	—	250
Other	—	220

Notes:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Figures exclude agency nurses and medical locums.

1992-93 provisional returns for Ealing hospital national health service trust show 18,226 people treated as in-patients, 5,560 treated as day cases and 117,126 people seen as out-patients. Information for earlier years is not available centrally.

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the total of public funding for the Ealing hospital NHS trust for the current year; what was the equivalent figure in each of the preceding 10 years, in real terms including those when Ealing hospital did not have a trust status; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: Ealing hospital national health service trust came into operation on 1 April 1992. Accounts showing sources of income for the first year of operation will be available towards the end of November. Information for earlier years is not available centrally.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Working Holidays

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* Ghanaian, *(b)* Nigerian, *(c)* Bangladeshi and *(d)* Indian nationals who applied while in the United Kingdom to remain as working holidaymakers were refused in each of the last five years;

(2) how many *(a)* Ghanaian, *(b)* Nigerian, *(c)* Bangladeshi and *(d)* Indian nationals applied while in the United Kingdom to remain as working holidaymakers (i) in 1992 and (ii) in the first six months of 1993.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information is of decisions on applications for an extension of stay as a working holidaymaker, and is given in the table.

Decisions[1] on applications made in the United Kingdom for an extension of stay as a working holidaymaker[2], by whether granted or refused, for certain nationalities

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993 (first six months)[3]
Ghana					
Granted	10	200	860	1,150	310
Refused	[4]—	[4]—	40	90	40
Nigeria					
Granted	70	860	1,910	1,650	380
Refused	10	50	120	300	110
Bangladesh					
Granted	[4]—	10	40	140	50
Refused	—	[4]—	—	10	10
India					
Granted	20	60	210	280	120
Refused	—	[4]—	[4]—	30	20

[1] Excluding dependants.
[2] Including both those whose previous leave was as a working holidaymaker, and those whose previous leave was in another capacity.
[3] Data are provisional and may be underrecorded.
[4] Five or fewer.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* Ghanaian, *(b)* Nigerian, *(c)* Bangladeshi and *(d)* Indian nationals who, having applied while in the United Kingdom to remain as working holiday makers, and been granted permission, were later readmitted for a further period for the same purpose in each of the last five years;

(2) how many *(a)* Ghanaian, *(b)* Nigerian, *(c)* Bangladeshi and *(d)* Indian nationals who, having applied at British high commission in their own countries, and been granted permission to enter the United Kingdom as working holiday makers were later readmitted for a further period for the same purpose in each of the last five years.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not identified separately in the statistics of passenger admissions.

Police Pensions

Mr. Robert Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out the amounts earmarked by each police authority in England for pension payments and represented as a percentage proportion of their overall budgets.

Mr. Howard: Information on local authority budget provision for pensions is not held centrally. The following table gives outturn information for 1992-93.

Police authority	*Net pensions expenditure[1] (Police and Civilians) £000s*	*Net pensions expenditure as a percentage of net current expenditure[2]*
Avon and Somerset	11,970	9·6
Bedfordshire	2,876	6·5
Cambridgeshire	4,131	8·3
Cheshire	6,840	9·4
Cleveland	6,647	11·1
Cumbria	5,181	10·5
Derbyshire	6,796	9·0
Devon and Cornwall	11,380	8·8
Dorset	4,768	8·6
Durham	6,045	11·4
Essex	9,458	7·5
Gloucestershire	4,145	8·6
Hampshire	10,727	7·9
Hertfordshire	4,851	7·1
Humberside	7,644	9·1
Kent	12,250	8·9
Lancashire	13,889	10·8
Leicestershire	8,433	11·6
Lincolnshire	5,355	10·5
Norfolk	4,877	8·3
Northamptonshire	3,929	7·8
North Yorkshire	7,250	12·4
Nottinghamshire	8,248	9·2
Staffordshire	11,038	12·6
Suffolk	3,671	7·2
Surrey	6,320	8·9
Sussex	11,763	10·2
Thames Valley	8,983	5·6
Warwickshire	2,419	5·7
West Mercia	5,608	6·8
Wiltshire	3,196	6·2
Greater Manchester	27,501	10·1
Merseyside	20,496	10·8
Northumbria	16,063	11·8
South Yorkshire	10,802	9·3
West Midlands	23,113	8·1
West Yorkshire	26,940	12·9
City of London	3,607	8·2
Metropolitan Police[3]	136,088	9·4
Total England	485,307	9·4

[1] Figures are net of pension contributions, transfer values and recharges to other authorities.
[2] Current expenditure net of pensions income, sales, fees and charges, interest and other receipts.
[3] Metropolitan Police figures are estimates only.

Fire and Civil Defence Funding

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answer of 23 July, *Official Report*, column *408*, if he will list for each county council and fire and civil defence authority and for each year since 1986-87, the amounts deducted by his Department from civil defence grant aid allocations in respect of income generated by local authority emergency planning units; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The table gives the amount of income which is declared by each county council and fire and civil defence authority for the five financial years 1990-91 to 1994-95. Figures for earlier years could be retrieved only by incurring disproportionate costs.

We are not aware of any case in which grant aid was reduced to take account of declared income. It remains our policy that local authorities should continue to benefit from income generate locally and they will be notified of the new arangemetns in time for 1 April 1994.

	Financial year				
Income	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*	*1993-94*	*1994-95*
Avon	—	1,000	—	—	—
Cheshire	9,139	7,101	5,775	7,400	—
Cleveland	—	120	—	—	—
Cornwall	582	—	—	—	—
Cumbria	165	844	655	500	500
Derbyshire	—	2,090	5,453	—	—
Devon	525	1,440	2,834	—	—
East Sussex	439	—	—	—	—
Hereford and Worcester	—	105	750	750	—
Isle of Wight	30	30	—	—	—
Lancashire	—	—	2,345	—	—
Leicestershire	—	592	—	—	—
Lincolnshire	—	—	1,200	—	—
Norfolk	—	460	—	—	—
Northamptonshire	3,614	3,620	2,622	10	10
North Yorkshire	—	187	800	—	—
Nottinghamshire	1,422	1,096	1,500	—	—
Somerset	1,794	1,680	1,644	1,600	1,600
Staffordshire	—	372	252	100	100
Surrey	42	—	—	—	—
Wiltshire	—	218	—	—	—
Greater Manchester	9,223	3,622	7,288	—	—
South Yorkshire	2,592	12,192	14,111	5,300	—
West Midlands	16,425	19,997	11,118	3,000	8,000
West Yorkshire	8,893	5,911	13,463	13,000	14,000
Gwynedd	167	—	—	—	—
West Glamorgan	225	525	69	40	40

Ms Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing for each metropolitan fire and civil defence authority and for the London fire and civil defence authority *(a)* its 1993-94 standard spending assessment, *(b)* its budgeted spending for 1993-94, *(c)* the percentage difference between *(a)* and *(b)* and *(d)* the cap proposed by him for 1993-94.

Mr. Howard: The information requested is shown in the table.

(£ Million)

Fire and Civil Defence Authority	*(a) 1993-94 Fire and Civil Defence SSA*	*(b) 1993-94 Fire and Civil Defence budgeted spending*	*(c) Percentage difference between (a) and (b)*	*(d) 1993-94 Capping limit*
London	247·910	247·749	–0·06	248·484
Greater Manchester	72·754	70·516	–3·08	72·754
Merseyside	48·327	47·429	–1·86	48·327
South Yorkshire	29·683	30·104	1·42	31·166
Tyne and Wear	35·357	33·803	–4·40	35·357
West Midlands	69·070	66·728	–3·39	69·070
West Yorkshire	50·752	52·392	3·23	53·069

Ms Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing for each relevant authority *(a)* its 1993-94 standard spending assessment for fire services, *(b)* its budgeted spending for 1993-94 on fire services and *(c)* the percentage difference between *(a)* and *(b)*.

Mr. Howard: The following table provides the information requested in respect of English county fire authorities.

£ million

Fire authority	(a) 1993-94 Fire and civil defence SSA	(b) 1993-94 Fire and civil defence budgeted spending	(c) Percentage difference between (a) and (b)
Avon	20·473	21·829	6·62
Bedfordshire	11·073	11·780	6·38
Berkshire	16·601	15·798	−4·84
Buckinghamshire	12·360	12·318	−0·34
Cambridgeshire	12·039	13·795	14·59
Cheshire	20·103	21·002	4·47
Cleveland	19·464	20·128	3·41
Cornwall	7·181	10·146	41·29
Cumbria	8·753	11·813	34·96
Derbyshire	17·067	18·272	7·06
Devon	19·557	22·240	13·72
Dorset	12·065	13·748	13·95
Durham	12·973	13·914	7·25
East Sussex	14·891	16·600	11·48
Essex	31·445	34·667	10·25
Gloucestershire	9·605	10·285	7·08
Hampshire	31·585	27·823	−11·91
Hereford and Worcester	12·116	12·025	−0·75
Hertfordshire	20·328	19·547	−3·84
Humberside	21·322	22·168	3·97
Isle of Wight	2·229	3·396	52·36
Kent	30·998	35·138	13·36
Lancashire	32·276	33·320	3·23
Leicestershire	16·924	14·878	−12·09
Lincolnshire	9·583	11·641	21·48
Norfolk	13·010	14·999	15·29
Northamptonshire	11·260	11·460	1·78
Northumberland	5·823	8·433	44·82
North Yorkshire	12·001	14·718	22·64
Nottinghamshire	21·087	20·784	−1·44
Oxfordshire	11·284	11·326	0·37
Shropshire	7·839	8·040	2·56
Somerset	7·693	9·349	21·53
Staffordshire	19·345	18·577	−3·97
Suffolk	11·023	12·770	15·85
Surrey	22·133	26·288	18·77
Warwickshire	8·993	11·574	28·70
West Sussex	14·836	16·122	8·67
Wiltshire	10·054	10·267	2·12
Isles of Scilly	0·053	0·088	66·04

Football Offences

Mr. Pendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list all persons and organisations in Holland with whom arrangements were made by his Department in the period preceding the England versus Holland football match of 13 October with a view to extending the provisions of the Football Spectators (Corresponding Offences in Italy) Order 1990 to cover offences committed in Holland: and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The Government continue to seek bilateral agreements under part II of the Football Spectators Act 1989. In the case of the Netherlands, officials have been in contact with officials in the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Ministry of the Interior, both direct and through the British embassy in the Hague. My right hon. and learned Friend has also written to the Dutch Minister of Justice on this subject.

Mr. Pendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many criminal proceedings involving alleged offences contained in sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Football (Offences) Act 1991 have been pursued since it came into force on 10 August 1991; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: Information for 1991 and 1992, which is provisional, is given in the following table. The 1993 data will not be available until autumn 1994.

Number of defendants prosecuted and found guilty of offences under sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Football (Offences) Act 1991[1], 1991 and 1992[2]. England and Wales

Offence	1991		1992[2]	
	Prosecutions	Convictions	Prosecutions	Convictions
Section 2				
Throwing a missile at or towards the playing area or any area in which spectators or other persons may be present	2	1	34	27
Section 3				
Taking part in indecent or racialist chanting	6	5	31	21

Offence	1991	1992[2]	
	Prosecutions	Convictions	Prosecutions	Convictions
Section 4				
Going on to the playing or adjacent area without lawful authority or lawful excuse	23	23	275	246

[1] Came into force on 10 August 1991.
[2] Provisional.

Young Offenders

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will give the number of 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18-year-old *(a)* men and *(b)* women held in custody in prisons in England and Wales on 18 October.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated 2 November 1993:

Population of persons aged 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 in prison service establishments in England and Wales.

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question asking how many 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 year old (a) men and (b) women were in custody on 18 October 1993.

The latest readily available information is for 30 June 1993 is shown in the enclosed table.

Replica Firearms

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he has on the number of armed attacks where it has subsequently been discovered that the criminal had used replica guns.

Mr. Maclean: The available information relates to offences recorded by the police in which imitation firearms were reported to have been used. This information is published in "Criminal Statistics England and Wales 1991", tables 3.4 and 3.5. The figures include replica firearms and all other types of imitation firearms including toys. A copy of this publication can be found in the Library.

Police, Bexley

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received about police strength in the Bexley division.

Mr. Charles Wardle: We have received representations from the Bexley Police Liaison Committee and the St. Michael's Residents Association.

Prison Population

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what has been the prison population in England and Wales in each year since 1980.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated 2 November 1993:

Prison Population Since 1980

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question asking what the prison population in England and Wales has been in each of the years since 1980.

The information you have requested is shown in the attached table.

Average population in custody[1] in England and Wales 1980-1993.

Year	Average population
1980	43,109
1981	43,436
1982	43,754
1983	43,772
1984	43,349
1985	46,278
1986	46,889
1987	48,963
1988	49,949
1989	48,610
1990	45,636
1991	45,897
1992	45,817
1993	[2]45,633

[1] Includes prisoners held in police cells
[2] Latest monthly figure (August 1993).

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the agreed normal prison accommodation for each of the prisons in England and Wales and the actual prison population in each prison on 18 October.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated 2 November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about Prison Service accommodation and population.

I attach a table showing the certified normal accommodation (CNA) and actual population in each establishment in England and Wales on 18 October 1993.

Establishment CNA and population on 18 October 1993.

Establishment	CNA	Population
Acklington	676	641
Albany	313	302
Aldington	133	97
Ashwell	404	392
Askham Grange	129	98
Aylesbury	241	240
Bedford	170	243
Belmarsh	841	692
Birmingham	638	712
Blakenhurst	549	549
Blantyre House	95	94
Blundeston	410	332
Brinsford	446	440
Bristol	374	414
Brixton	518	604
Brockhill	156	133

Establishment	CNA	Population
Bullingdon	635	610
Bullwood Hall	125	111
Camp Hill	406	342
Canterbury	128	187
Cardiff	328	436
Castington	300	294
Channings Wood	594	572
Chelmsford	217	315
Coldingley	222	236
Cookham Wood	120	113
Dartmoor	560	500
Deerbolt	432	348
Dorchester	136	211
Dover	316	192
Downview	287	280
Drake Hall	255	202
Durham	364	522
East Sutton Park	85	78
Elmley	635	602
Erlestoke	206	206
Everthorpe	228	224
Exeter	317	416
Featherstone	599	588
Feltham	874	784
Finnamore Wood	112	90
Ford	536	455
Frankland	339	325
Full Sutton	604	539
Garth	512	507
Gartree	258	249
Glen Parva	854	755
Gloucester	207	241
Grendon	190	168
Guys Marsh	300	178
Haslar	145	142
Hatfield	180	175
Haverigg	345	295
Hewell Grange	136	158
High Down	549	506
Highpoint	679	646
Hindley	317	324
Hollesley Bay	425	295
Holloway	517	492
Holme House	649	527
Hull	269	458
Huntercombe	240	159
Kingston	104	102
Kirkham	620	597
Kirklevington	74	67
Lancaster	186	258
Lancaster Farms	260	328
Latchmere House	131	121
Leeds	700	1,141
Leicester	194	327
Lewes	267	335
Leyhill	410	409
Lincoln	444	602
Lindholme	622	598
Littlehey	543	529
Liverpool	931	1,219
Long Lartin	362	337
Low Newton	199	260
Maidstone	513	518
Manchester	291	311
Moorland	641	648
Morton Hall	168	169
The Mount	484	472
New Hall	205	155
North Sea Camp	204	200
Northallerton	146	93
Norwich	463	445
Nottingham	218	206
Onley	456	447
Parkhurst	286	236
Pentonville	559	659
Portland	424	346
Prescoed	40	38
Preston	324	542
Pucklechurch	56	54
Ranby	331	329
Reading	182	171
Risley	773	706
Rochester	303	186
Rudgate	300	268
Send	113	110
Shepton Mallet	158	186
Shrewsbury	168	297
Spring Hill	210	203
Stafford	532	505
Standford Hill	384	296
Stocken	396	390
Stoke Heath	300	262
Styal	180	200
Sudbury	509	426
Swaleside	504	503
Swansea	213	261
Swinfen Hall	167	163
Thorn Cross	240	182
Thorp Arch	166	163
Usk	201	192
The Verne	552	542
Wakefield	662	657
Wandsworth	838	801
Wayland	580	548
Wellingborough	284	280
Werrington	110	110
Wetherby	120	150
Whatton	217	213
Whitemoor	534	495
Winchester	361	413
The Wolds	320	315
Woodhill	492	486
Wormwood Scrubs	527	764
Wymott	110	102

Border and Immigration Control

Mr. Kenneth Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what matters were discussed at the recent meeting in Paris of Ministers responsible for border and immigration control; and what conclusions were reached.

Mr. Charles Wardle: I assume that my right hon. and learned Friend has in mind the meeting of the Schengen executive committee which was held in Paris on 18 October. The United Kingdom is not a signatory to the Schengen convention and was therefore not represented at the meeting. I understand that its main conclusion was that implementation of the convention should be postponed until 1 February 1994.

Leicestershire Police

Mr. Janner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will provide additional resources for the Leicestershire police force.

Mr. Charles Wardle: In view of the need to maintain firm control over public expenditure, no police forces are receiving establishment increases for 1993-94.

Suicide

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the annual cost of individual acts of suicide and attempted suicide in terms of police investigation, health and social services costs and coroners' costs; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: This information is not collected.

Prison Ship

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what negotiations his Department is holding with third parties for the purchase of a prison ship; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what steps his Department has taken to commission the construction of a prison ship or negotiate with a third party for the commissioning of the construction of a prison ship; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Alex Salmond, dated 2 November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Questions about prison ships.

The Prison Service is considering a number of options as part of its contingency planning to identify ways of increasing the capacity of the prison estate. Marine detention facilities are one of the options being considered.

At this stage, no action has been taken to procure a prison ship, although preliminary discussions have taken place. These discussions are confined to existing ships and do not include the construction of new ships.

Private Security Firms

Mr. Janner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many private security organisations are engaged in the policing of housing estates in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales and *(c)* Northern Ireland.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Information on the number of patrols by private security firms in England and Wales and Northern Ireland is not held centrally.

Mr. Janner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will introduce a system of licensing for private security organisations.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The Government's policy is to support the development of self-regulation within the private security industry. There are no plans to introduce a system of licensing.

Joy Riding

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to reduce the number of deaths and injuries arising from joy riding; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: The Government are monitoring the effects of recent legislative measures. The Criminal Justice Act 1993 doubled to 10 years' imprisonment the maximum penalty for causing death by dangerous driving or careless driving while under the influence of drink or drugs. The Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992 was introduced to provide more appropriate penalties for the menace of joy riding.

We will continue with our strategy to reduce the opportunity for all forms of car crime by encouraging motor manufacturers and insurers to improve vehicle security, and motorists to adopt good security measures.

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been involved in joy-riding accidents which have resulted in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* injury in each of the past five years (i) in England and Wales and (ii) on Merseyside; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: The available information is given in the following table. Provisional information is given for 1992 only on the number of notifiable offences and persons cautioned, prosecuted and convicted under the Theft Act 1968, section 12A as added by the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992, section 1, which came into force on 1 April 1992. Data for 1993 are not yet available. Prior to 1992, the term "joy riding" related to offences which would have been included in the theft and unauthorised taking of motor vehicles offence classification.

Number of offences recorded and persons cautioned, prosecuted and found guilty in Merseyside police force area and England and Wales under the Theft Act 1968, section 12A as added by the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992
England and Wales 1992[1]

Offence description		*Merseyside*	*England and Wales*
Owing to the driving of the vehicle, an accident occurs causing the death of any person	Offences recorded	—	19
	Cautions	—	1
	Prosecutions	—	33
	Convictions	—	21
(a) the vehicle was driven dangerously on a road or other public place; or (b) owing to the driving of the vehicle, an accident occurred causing injury to any person or damage to any property other than the vehicle; or (c) damage was caused to the vehicle	Offences recorded	45	2,355
	Cautions	1	111
	Prosecutions	22	1,700
	Convictions	17	1,211

[1] Provisional

Metropolitan Police

Ms Ruddock To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many chief superintendent and chief inspector posts he expects to be removed from the Metropolitan police by 1 April 1995;

(2) if he will estimate the number of chief superintendents and chief inspectors remaining in the Metropolitan police who will be redeployed following the rank changes announced on 28 October;

(3) what plans he has to meet the cost of any redundancies in the Metropolitan police arising from the deletion of chief superintendent and chief inspector posts in the Metropolitan police service between now and 1 April 1995; and what is his estimate of this cost.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The Commissioner has in hand a review of the internal management structure of the Metropolitan police and will need to consider in that context how best to implement the decisions about ranks in the police service which my right hon. and learned Friend announced on 28 October. It is too early to say how the necessary restructuring will be achieved.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many superintendents, chief superintendents, inspectors and chief inspectors are currently employed in the Metropolitan police service.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The following is the information requested:

	Number
Chief Superintendents	133
Superintendents	229
Chief Inspectors	489
Inspectors	1,479

Mr. Constantin Rudaro

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the case of the Romanian refugee Constantin Rudaro was drawn to the attention of the immigration and nationality department; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: I will write to the hon. Member.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing, for each of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department, whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests.

Mr. Howard: None of the executive non-departmental public bodies for which the Home Office is responsible is required by statute to give the public rights of access in the manner specified in the hon. Member's question, though section 46 of the Race Relations Act 1976 requires the publication of the report and accounts of the Commission for Racial Equality. It is also the practice to publish the reports and accounts of the following executive non-departmental bodies for which the Home Office is responsible:

—The Office of the Data Protection Registrar
—Gaming Board of Great Britain
—Police Complaints Authority
—Horserace Totalisator Board
—Horserace Betting Levy Board

Private Investment Projects

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Howard: There has been one project: an agreement with Lynton plc to provide new immigration detention facilities at Gatwick airport.

"Statewatch"

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department to how many copies his Department subscribes of the publication "Statewatch."

Mr. Howard: Two.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Quarry House (Film)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what requests BBC TV North made to his Department in respect of permission to film at his Department's premises at Quarry house, Leeds on 4 May; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Burt: The Benefits Agency national press office has no record of a request from BBC TV North to film at Quarry house on 4 May 1993.

Benefits for Children

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how much will be spent on benefits for children in low-income families, excluding child benefit in the next financial year.

Mr. Burt: The information is not available in the precise form requested. It is estimated that in 1994-95, the amount spent on families, excluding child benefit, will be £8,850 million.

Sickness and Invalidity Benefit

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will update the information given to the hon. Member for Blackpool, North (Mr. Elletson) on 7 July, *Official Report*, column *165*, to include estimates for 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Mr. Scott: The latest available information is in the tables:

Numbers claiming benefit

Date	*Sickness benefit*[2]	*Invalidity benefit*
29 May 1982	469,000	684,000
2 April 1983	408,000	737,000
31 March 1984	[3]247,000	797,000
30 March 1985	225,000	849,000
5 April 1986	237,000	899,000
4 April 1987	[3]187,000	968,000
2 April 1988	228,000	1,047,000
1 April 1989	266,000	1,126,000
31 March 1990	309,000	1,209,000
30 March 1991	372,000	1,306,000
4 April 1992	458,000	1,439,000

Notes:

[1] *Source:* Based on a 1 per cent. sample of claimants rounded to the nearest thousand. The latest date for which information is available is 4 April 1992.

[2] Includes people receiving national insurance credits who are claiming but are not entitled to sickness benefit.

[3] Statutory sick pay introduced from 6 April 1983 for a maximum eight weeks sickness absence in a tax year. From 6 April 1986 statutory sick pay was extended to up to 28 weeks in a period of incapacity for work.

Estimated average numbers receiving benefit at any one time

Year	*Sickness benefit*	*Invalidity benefit*
1992-93	135,000	1,490,000
1993-94	130,000	1,585,000
1994-95	135,000	1,680,000

Source: Departmental report.

Benefits

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will update his answer to the hon. Member for Sheffield, Attercliffe (Mr. Betts) of 25 February, *Official Report*, column *681*, including the effect of the taper for council tax benefit.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the table. The base rate has remained unchanged at 6 per cent. since 26 January 1993. The taper in council tax benefit, which was introduced in April 1993, is 20 per cent. Council tax benefit can meet a maximum 100 per cent. of the council tax whereas in community charge benefit, the maximum rebate was 80 per cent. of the community charge.

Date 1 April 1993

	Figures
Base rate (per cent.)	6·00
Amount of interest earned on capital of £5,000 invested at base rate (per week)	£5·769
Benefit deduction for £5,000 capital in both housing benefit and council tax benefit (per week)	£8·00
Tapered amount set against benefit (per week)	
HB (65 per cent. taper)	£5·20
CTB (20 per cent taper)	£1·60

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what efforts are presently being made to ensure people know of the full range of benefits available; and what strategies are being pursued to ensure everyone gets their full entitlement.

Mr. Burt: The provision of information and advice to the public on benefits is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Mr. David Hinchliffe, dated 1 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions raised about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking what efforts are being made to ensure people know of the full range of benefits available; and what strategies are being pursued to ensure everyone gets their full entitlement.

As you will be aware, the Secretary of State announced, on 9 September, that the Benefits Agency is involved in a major programme of work designed to improve the service given to customers. The intention is to provide a One Stop benefit delivery service which aims to minimise the points of contact for customers who claim more than one benefit. The first stage towards a One Stop service should be in place by mid 1994 and it is envisaged that customers will then be able to obtain from their local Benefits Agency Office:

1. Advice and information on all the major benefits regardless of where they are administered.
2. Access to most benefit claim forms.
3. Help with claiming benefits even if they are not locally administered.

In connection with the One Stop project, the Benefits Agency is establishing better links with other Agencies and associated service providers, such as Employment Services and Local Authorities. The Agency is also working closely with a range of advisers and intermediaries to ensure that they have access to appropriate information and support to enable them to brief their clients effectively on benefit related issues.

The availability and visibility of information materials in non-Benefits Agency outlets is being increased; currently over 70,000 intermediaries have direct access to our material through the Benefits Agency Publicity Register. In addition, steps are being taken to improve the range of material available in other forms, for example in Braille, large print, audio cassette and in ethnic translation.

The Social Security Freeline Service provides information and advice on all benefits to the general public and as an addition to this the Benefit Enquiry Line gives advice to people with disabilities and their carers; this service now includes a minicom number and expanded form filling facility. To help customers further, a Family Credit Helpline was introduced, coinciding with a major advertising campaign, when the Secretary of State launched the Return to Work initiative in April.

Finally, a national Customer Service Definition, outlining the standards and range of services to be provided, has been issued to all Benefits Agency offices.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

State Benefits

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people depend entirely on state benefits for their income.

Mr. Burt: In 1990-91, there was an estimated total of 3·6 million adults and children living in families whose only source of income was state benefits.

Marginal Tax and Benefit Rates

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will update his answer of 25 February, *Official Report*, column *682*, on marginal tax and social security rates to include estimates for 1993-94 and 1994-95, the latter based on the assumption of statutory indexation and including measures already announced in the 1993 Budget.

Mr. Burt: Estimates for 1994-95 on marginal tax and social security rates, can be updated only at disproportionate cost. It is anticipated that the information necessary to provide an update will be available early next year. Estimates for 1993-94 are given in the table.

Number of people with marginal deduction rates including social security

	1985-86	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*	*1993-94*
100 per cent. plus	70	0	0	0	0	0	0
90 per cent. plus	130	45	45	45	55	75	100
80 per cent. plus	290	345	210	235	205	250	200
70 per cent. plus	290	515	415	395	400	500	545
60 per cent. plus	450	515	420	395	405	510	555
50 per cent. plus	680	515	420	395	405	510	560
40 per cent. plus	n/a	n/a	455	665	435	520	605

Notes:

1. Figures for 1985-86 to 1991-92 are for benefit units where at least one partner works 24 hours or more.
2. Figures for 1992-93 are for benefit units where at least one partner works for 16 hours a week or more. These people would have experienced 100 per cent. deduction rate whilst on income support so their circumstances as a result of the change to family credit, will have improved.
3. The information is based on family expenditure Survey.

Family Benefits

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many families with children, broken down into lone parent families and two-parent families, are in receipt of income support, family credit or disability working allowance; and for each type of family for each relevant benefit, how many include a qualifying child.

Mr. Burt: The table shows the latest available figures:

Benefit in payment	*Lone parent families*	*Two parent families*
Income support (IS)	[1]985,000	[1]511,000
Family credit (FC)	[3]206,000	[2]281,000
Disability working allowance (DWA)	[3]270	[3]709
Totals	[4]1,191,270	[4]792,709

Note:

[1] Income support quarterly statistical inquiry, November 1992—rounded to nearest thousand.

[2] As at 30 April 1993—rounded to nearest thousand.

[3] As at 30 April 1993.

[4] There will be a small overlap because those on FC or DWA may also claim IS in mid-award if they cease work.

All the above cases include children for whom benefit is paid.

Child Benefit

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what would be the level of child benefit in 1993-94 and 1994-95 if it had been fully uprated since April 1987 and its structure had remained the same, assuming full indexation of the benefit in 1994-95.

Mr. Burt: The rate would be £10·30 in 1993-94 and £10·50 in 1994-95.

Benefit Rebates

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will estimate the effect on revenues in 1993-94 and 1994-95 of reducing the maximum amount of rebate payable for *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* council tax benefit to (i) 90 per cent., (ii) 80 per cent. and (iii) 70 per cent. of eligible rent on council tax payments.

Mr. Burt: The information requested for 1993-94 is in the table. Estimates of the effect on revenues at 1994-95 benefit levels and prices are not yet available.

Percentage of eligible rent and council tax used in the assessment of CTB and HB	*Total savings in housing benefit* (£ million)	*Total savings in council tax benefit* (£ million)
90	1,600	420
80	3,070	685
70	4,365	915

Source: Estimates based on the 1989-90-91 family expenditure surveys, uprated to 1993-94 benefit levels and prices, rounded to the nearest £5 million.

Pensioners' Incomes

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will update the answer to the hon. Member for Staffordshire, Moorlands (Sir D. Knox) of 15 December 1992, *Official Report*, columns *150-51*, relating to pensioners incomes, giving the most recently available figures.

Mr. Hague: Information is not available in the form requested. As with the earlier answer, the requested distribution was in some cases too detailed to give a reliable number of sample cases. Certain ranges have therefore been merged in order to ensure estimates are based on at least 20 sample cases. In addition, the nature of the survey techniques used in the family expenditure survey means that the separate incomes of husbands and wives within a couple cannot be identified reliably. The answer therefore categorises single people—male and female—and couples only. The available information is in the tables.

Weekly non-benefit income distribution—Pensioners
Single Female Pensioners
£ in January 1991 prices

Thousands	*Income (£)*
1,477	0-5
285	5-10
195	10-15
178	15-20
267	20-30
161	30-40
135	40-50
112	50-60
100	60-70
72	70-80
53	80-90
50	90-100
167	100-150
115	150-200
83	200-300
72	Over 300

Single Male Pensioners

£ in January 1991 prices

Thousands	*Income (£)*
266	0-5
48	5-10
53	10-15
53	15-20
74	20-30
62	30-40
48	40-50
36	50-70
60	70-100
72	100-150
42	150-200
42	200-300
41	Over 300

Weekly non-benefit income distribution—pensioners
Couples (husband over pension age)

£ in January 1991 prices

Income (£)	*Thousands*
0-5	472
5-10	130
10-15	89
15-20	91
20-30	181
30-40	160
40-50	120
50-60	113
60-70	79
70-80	92
80-90	88
90-100	86
100-150	285
150-200	184
200-300	198
300-400	109
400-500	61
Over 500	84

Source: Family expenditure surveys 1990-91.
Notes: The maximum amount of each category is rounded up to the nearest £1 for ease of reference, eg. where a category is shown as 10-20 it should read £10-£19·99.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will estimate the effect on revenues in 1994-95 and 1993-94 of increasing the taper for the withdrawal of housing benefit to *(a)* 70 per cent., *(b)* 75 per cent. and *(c)* 80 per cent.

Mr. Burt: The information requested for 1993-94 is in the table. Estimates of the effect on revenues at 1994-95 benefit levels and prices are not yet available.

Housing benefit taper Per cent.	*Total savings (£ million)*
70	130
75	240
80	340

Source: Estimates based on the 1989-90-91 family expenditure surveys, uprated to 1993-94 benefit levels and prices, rounded to the nearest £5 million.

Statutory Maternity Pay

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish the external medical advice on which recent changes to the regulations regarding statutory maternity pay were based.

Mr. Hague: There have been no recent changes to statutory maternity pay. The Government recently issued a consultation document describing proposed changes to our maternity benefits schemes to implement the maternity pay provisions of the EC pregnant workers directive. The consultation period has ended and the responses are being carefully examined.

Income Support

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish figures on the same basis as table series 10 of the income support statistics annual inquiry for May 1992 showing for each premium group in Great Britain *(a)* the average amount of deductions for all cases with more than one deduction and *(b)* the average amount of benefit before deductions.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the table.

Income support recipients
Cases with more than one deduction by premium group

	Number of cases	*Average amount of deductions £*	*Average IS before deductions £*
Total cases	333,500	15·99	68·24
Premium groups			
Higher pensioner premium	3,600	12·47	39·15
Enhanced pensioner premium	600	14·24	10·39
Pensioner premium	10,100	13·83	51·75
Severe disability premium (higher rate)	100	23·80	66·20
Severe disability premium (lower rate)	1,500	17·71	78·05
Disability premium	35,200	16·23	65·66
Lone parent premium	176,400	16·73	70·41
Disabled child premium	4,800	22·17	89·07
Family premium	245,000	17·12	75·97
Carer premium	5,100	20·05	66·11
No premium	54,000	12·47	45·24

Notes:

1. The numbers of cases given are the same as those published in table 10.2 of the income support statistics annual inquiry, May 1992. For use elsewhere, these would normally be rounded to the nearest thousand as recommended on page 17 of the inquiry.
2. The average amount of deductions given is the average total sum deducted per case, and is correct to the nearest penny.
3. The average weekly amount of income support before deduction is correct to the nearest penny.
4. Income support recipients may also receive other benefits, from which deductions may be made. Therefore the average amount of deductions may exceed the average amount of income support.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 21 April, *Official Report*, columns *137-38*, on income support, if he will update the information to include a breakdown for 1992 and any estimates for 1993.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the table. 1992 is the latest year for which regional figures are available. Forecast information for claimants and dependants by region is not available.

Income Support recipients, claimants, partners and dependants by region

Region	*Claimants*	*Partners*	*Dependants*
North Eastern	807,000	149,000	449,000
London, North	957,000	185,000	563,000
South Western	398,000	78,000	203,000
Wales	301,000	55,000	170,000
Midlands	870,000	173,000	506,000
North Western	786,000	126,000	440,000
Scotland	536,000	77,000	260,000
London, South	856,000	148,000	476,000
Great Britain	5,511,000	991,000	3,067,000

Notes:
1. *Source:* Income support statistics quarterly inquiry, November 1992.
2. All figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand, and so may not sum to the totals given.
3. Information is not available for the standard statistical regions. Figures are therefore given by social security regions.
4. "Partners" are people living as a married couple.
5. "Dependants" are young people aged under 19 who live in the parental home.

Spending

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will update the answer of 7 June, *Official Report*, columns *144-45*, to the hon. Member for Ribble Valley (Mr. Evans) on the change in real terms in social security spending, giving estimates for 1993-94 and 1994-95, expressed in 1993-94 prices.

Mr. Scott: Details of total security spending from 1978-79 to 1994-95 are given in the table.

Years	*Expenditure in £ million* *Cash*	*1993-94 prices*	*Percentage change in real terms over previous year*
1978-79	16,602	47,615	—
1979-80	19,616	48,218	1·27
1980-81	23,751	49,337	2·32
1981-82	28,963	54,866	11·21
1982-83	33,000	58,356	6·36
1983-84	36,881	62,334	6·82
1984-85	39,957	64,273	3·11
1985-86	43,502	66,353	3·24
1986-87	46,859	69,246	4·36
1987-88	49,145	68,841	−0·59
1988-89	49,967	65,242	−5·23
1989-90	53,026	64,965	−0·42
1990-91	59,497	67,489	3·89
1991-92	69,048	73,430	8·80
1992-93	78,343	80,497	9·62
1993-94	84,495	84,495	4·97
1994-95	88,250	84,652	0·19

Notes:
1. 1992-93 figures are estimated outturn.
2. 1993-94 and 1994-95 figures represent anticipated expenditure.
3. The real terms decrease over the period 1987-88 to 1989-90 is largely attributable to the fall in unemployment since 1986.

Council Tax Benefit

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will estimate the effect on revenues in 1993-94 and 1994-95 of increasing the taper for the withdrawal of council tax benefit to *(a)* 25 per cent., *(b)* 30 per cent. and *(c)* 35 per cent.

Mr. Burt: The information requested for 1993-94 is in the table. Estimates of the effect on revenues at 1994-95 benefit levels and prices are not yet available.

Council tax benefit taper	*Total savings (£ million)*
25 per cent.	55
30 per cent.	95
35 per cent.	125

Source: Estimates based on 1989-90-91 family expenditure surveys, uprated to 1993-94 benefit levels and prices, rounded to the nearest £5 million.

Mortgage Interest

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans he has to end the payment of mortgage interest to recipients of income support.

Mr. Burt: The long-term review of benefits that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has set in train is looking at all aspects of the benefits system. No decisions have been taken yet.

Private Capital

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Hague: There have been no such projects.

Adopted Babies

Mrs. Helen Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what maternity benefit is available for mothers of adopted babies.

Mr. Burt: The two main maternity benefits, statutory maternity pay and maternity allowance, are available only to natural mothers and are intended to provide a measure of income replacement to help working women give up work around the time of the birth in the interests of their own and the unborn baby's well-being.

The social fund, however, provides a non-recoverable flat-rate maternity payment to families receiving income support, family credit or disability working allowance. Payment is made to qualifying adoptive parents if the adopted child is less than one-year-old.

Adoptive parents can also claim child benefit and, where appropriate, increases of other benefits for adopted children.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list the questions that are required to be answered by single parents wishing to obtain benefit from his Department's Child Support Agency; and if he will send to the hon. Member for Don Valley a copy of the questionnaire and the guidance notes issued to his officers at his agency.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Mr. Martin Redmond, dated 2 November 1993:

As Chief Executive to the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security about the questions required to be answered by single parents wishing to obtain benefit from the Child Support Agency and the questionnaire and the guidance notes issued to officers of the Agency.

Clients who use the Agency's services are asked to complete a Maintenance Application Form (MAF) giving details of their circumstances. There are three versions of this form; one for those clients in receipt of Income Support, one for those not in receipt of Income Support and one for children in Scotland. In addition to the initial questions asked on the MAF further questions may be necessary depending on the individual circumstances of the case. Many factors need to be taken into account when making an assessment and it is important for the Agency to have all the necessary information about the circumstances of both the Parent with Care and the Absent Parent to ensure that the assessment is accurate. I shall send you copies of the relevant application forms and will also place copies in the Library of the House.

Guidance instructions to Agency staff are contained in the Child Support Manual and the Field Operations Guide. Copies of this Guide were placed in the House Library in April.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the House Library.

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish a table showing how many current Child Support Agency assessments are *(a)* nil, *(b)* £2·20, *(c)* £2·21 to £9·99, *(d)* £10 to £19·99, *(e)* £20 to £29·99, *(f)* £30 to £39.99, *(g)* £40 to £49·99, *(h)* £50 to £69·99, *(i)* £70 to £99·99, *(j)* £100 to £149·99 and *(k)* over £150 a week.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Mr. Keith Bradley, dated 29 October 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking a number of questions about maintenance assessments.

I am sorry that the information you requested is not routinely available. The number of maintenance assessments completed by the Agency to the end of September 1993 is 36,610, but the level of assessments is not broken down as requested.

I am sorry not to have been more helpful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) whether the code of practice to be followed by the bailiffs appointed to act on behalf of the Child Support Agency will be made available to *(a)* the Citizens Advice Bureau and *(b)* other advice agencies;

(2) what steps the Child Support Agency will be taking to monitor the work of the bailiffs appointed to act on its behalf;

(3) which firm of bailiffs has been appointed by the Child Support Agency to act on its behalf in levying distraint against absent parents who have failed to pay maintenance due; and whether the firm of bailiffs appointed has an agreed code of practice.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Mr. Keith Bradley, dated 29 October 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking a number of questions about the work of bailiffs appointed to act for the Agency.

Raynor Ferrar and Co. of Iver in Buckinghamshire have been appointed as the Agency's bailiffs. The company currently operates under its own code of practice, endorsed by the Certified Bailiffs Association, but a code of practice relating specifically to the Agency's work will shortly be made publicly available and a copy will be placed in the House Library. All activity undertaken on the Agency's behalf will be closely monitored and the company will provide detailed monthly reports covering every case.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 3 November 1993

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Land Ownership

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what steps his Department is taking to prepare land ownership statistics for England and Wales which will identify the level of domestic ownership of England and Wales.

Mr. John M. Taylor: There are no plans to produce such statistics at the present time.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department when his Department intends to make the registration of land ownership in England and Wales compulsory.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Compulsory registration of title on sale was extended to the whole of England and Wales on 1 December 1990 under the provisions of the Land Registration Act 1925. The Government indicated in the citizens charter White Paper that they would explore options to complete the land register in the absence of a sale of title. Responses to the subsequent consultation paper issued by the Land Registry, "Completing the Land Register in England and Wales", are presently being assessed and will be taken into account in formulating future policy.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Annunciator

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee what facilities will be available to hon. Members on the new annunciator service.

Mr. Waller: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Bosworth (Mr. Tredinnick) on 13 July, *Official Report,* column *444.*

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee on which dates the new annunciator service will be operational for each building of the parliamentary estate.

Mr. Waller: The new annunciator equipment, which was demonstrated to the House on 22 July, is currently undergoing acceptance tests. If those tests are successfully completed, the equipment is expected to come into operation, serving screens throughout the parliamentary estate, early in 1994.

Data and Video Network

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee (1) by which date each building on the parliamentary estate will be cabled;

(2) when the Information Committee expects to report to the House on the provision of a parliamentary data and video network.

Mr. Waller: The Information Committee hopes to report on the parliamentary data and video network early in the new year. It intends to deal with the timing of cabling as part of that study.

Word Processing Training

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee if he will undertake a questionnaire to gauge the demand from hon. Members for training courses in the use of word processors.

Mr. Waller: As part of its inquiry into the parliamentary data and video network the Committee has sent a questionnaire to all Members. The responses will be considered by the Committee as part of its deliberations which, it is hoped, will lead to a report to the House early in 1994.

Questions and Answers

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee what plans he has to include in the parliamentary on-line information system the full text of answers in entirety relating to parliamentary questions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Waller: The Library is in the process of upgrading the software and hardware for the parliamentary on-line information system (POLIS). When the upgrading is completed in spring 1994, the Library, in co-operation with the Department of the Official Report, intends to create a database containing the complete text of oral questions and debates.

Providing the text of written answers to parliamentary questions in the POLIS database is also in the Library's development programme, but this involves complications resulting from the format of some answers.

Vote Bundle

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee (1) if he will list the recommendations of the last report on the format of the Vote bundle that were *(a)* implemented and *(b)* not implemented; and if he will consider a further review of the format and content of the Vote bundle;

(2) what proposals he has to rationalise the content of the Vote bundle or otherwise reduce its cost.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: The Accommodation and Administration Sub-Committee of the Services Committee carried out a full investigation into the Vote bundle in 1991. Its three recommendations which have been implemented were: *(a)* the removal of Division lists *(b)* the removal of daily minutes of proceedings of statutory instruments Committees *(c)* the abolition of the Blue Order Book and its replacement by a White Order Book available on demand.

I see no reason at present for a further review, but the Committee would of course consider carefully any specific new suggestions made by hon. Members.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Finance and Services Committee (1) if he will examine the possibility of producing a one-page daily agenda for the front of the Order Paper;

(2) if he will take steps to separate the list of written questions from the Vote bundle and make them available only on request.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: Both these suggestions were made by my hon. Friend to the former Accommodation and Administration Sub-Committee of the Services Committee which decided not to recommend their adoption. I see no reason to reconsider these specific proposals at this stage.

Rifle Range

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Finance and Services Committee what is the cost of maintenance of the rifle range; what is the rate of use of the rifle range; and if he will conduct a cost-benefit assessment of its current usage.

Mr. Channon: I have asked the Director of Works to write to the hon. Member in respect of the maintenance costs of the range. The other points raised by the hon. Member are matters for the Houses of Parliament Sports and Social Club, which operates the range.

New Palace Yard (Filming)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if the Committee will consider introducing proposals to amend the rules relating to photography in the Palace of Westminster so as to prohibit filming in New Palace Yard after 12 noon.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: The Administration Committee has already agreed to review the regulations governing photography and filming in the Palace of Westminster. Consideration is expected to begin early in the new year, and I shall ensure that the issue raised by my hon. Friend is included in the Committee's deliberations.

Members' Services

Mr. Allen: To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, representing the House of Commons Commission, if the Commission will institute a survey of Members to ascertain what additional services they would like to have provided.

Mr. Beith: It is for the domestic committees to maintain an oversight of the needs of hon. Members in consultation with House Departments, and to make recommendations for additional services on the basis of a considered study. Their proposals are then considered as necessary by the Finance and Services Committee and the Commission, as well as the House in the case of a major new service.

The Commission has no plans to undertake a survey of the kind suggested by the hon. Member.

Training for Members

Mr. Allen: To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, representing the House of Commons Commission, if he will consider bringing forward plans for induction courses for new hon. Members and in-service training for existing Members in conjunction with the Civil Service college; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I have been asked to reply.

Departments of the House carry out a variety of introductions to their services for new Members. In addition, all Members receive a Members' Handbook describing the services provided by House Departments and other organisations such as the Transport Office, the Post Office and the Gymnasium. If the hon. Member has any specific proposals for induction courses or in-service training, he should bring them to the attention of the Administration Committee.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

National Lottery

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what consideration he has given to the establishment of a charitable foundation to *(a)* operate the national lottery and *(b)* distribute the funds from the national lottery; and what would be the financial effects of doing so.

Mr. Sproat: The question of a charitable foundation to operate the national lottery was debated extensively in both Houses during the passage of the legislation. *(a)* The licence to operate the lottery will be awarded by the Director General of the National Lottery after a competitive tender exercise designed to maximise the proceeds for good causes. There is no reason why a charitable foundation should not bid for the licence.

(b) Any new body established to assess applications for lottery funds would need expertise in the areas of art, sport and heritage. Statutory bodies with this expertise already exist. Duplication of the functions of these bodies would be inefficient and reduce the national lottery proceeds available for good causes.

Art Funding, London

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what has been the amount of art funding granted to projects covering the Greater London area in each of the last three years.

Mr. Brooke: Government funding for the arts in London is channelled through the Arts Council, and is provided both direct to clients and through the London Arts Board. The amount of Arts Council funding for the Greater London area—excluding national companies—in each of the last three years is as follows:

	£ million
1992-93	27·93
1991-92	23·39
1990-91	19·31

In addition, aggregate funding for the national companies, most of which are based wholly or mainly in London, for each of the three years was: £62·64 million, 1992-93; £58·11 million, 1991-92; and £51·46 million, 1990-91.

Arts Council

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what percentage of the Arts Council's budget is spent on administration; and what were the equivalent figures five and 10 years ago.

Mr. Brooke: The percentage of the Arts Council's budget spent on administration in 1992-93, 1987-88 and 1982-83 is set out in the table:

	1992-93 £	*1987-88* £	*1982-83* £
Grant in aid	221,200,000	139,300,000	91,300,000
Administration of subsidies and services	7,611,522	4,826,000	3,455,716
Percentage spent on administration	3·44	3·46	3·79

Source: Audited accounts.

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage how many clients per head of staff were handled by *(a)* the Arts Council and *(b)* its music department (i) 10 years ago and (ii) now.

Mr. Brooke: The number of clients per head of staff handled by the Arts Council and its music department 10 years ago and in 1992-93 are set out in the table:

	1992-93	*1982-83*
Total number of individual clients	1,317	923
of which music	303	182
Total number of staff (excluding trading)	151	214
of which music	8	13
Total number of grants per staff member	8·72	4·31
Number of music grants per staff member	37·88	14·00

London Orchestras

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list the members of the committee to review the funding of the four London orchestras; and if he will also list their relevant qualifications for this task.

Mr. Brooke: The membership of the committee, together with relevant background information, is as follows:

Sir Leonard Hoffman (chairman):
A Lord Justice of Appeal and member of the board of English National Opera;
Sir Brian Bailey:
Member of the board of the Bournemouth Orchestras;
Anthony Camden:
Oboist and Dean of Music, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts;
Henry Fogel:
Executive Director, Chicago Symphony Orchestra;
Ian Horsburgh:
Principal, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Vice Chairman of the London Arts Board;
Tony Pender:
Chairman of the Northern Sinfonia.

Private Investment Projects

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Sproat *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* A number of projects are currently under consideration, but none has yet reached the stage where any details can be given. By their nature, such projects involve a long lead-time, but we will make announcements about any major projects as soon as we are in a position to do so.

Many of the bodies sponsored by this Department—notably museums and galleries—have, for a number of years, sought and received private funding for building and other projects. In addition, the Department is involved in a number of business sponsorship schemes which encourages matching funding from the public and private sectors.

Remembrance Service, Cenotaph

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what plans there are to privatise the arrangements for the service of remembrance at the Cenotaph.

Mr. Sproat *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* Provision of individual works services such as the cleaning and repair of the Cenotaph has for many years been managed and carried out by Building Management South East as part of the Property Services Agency. Now that Building Management South East Ltd. is in the private sector it is important that other firms have the opportunity to compete for its work. I will therefore be inviting competitive tenders in due course. There will be no change in the actual service of remembrance.

ENVIRONMENT

Biological Diversity Convention

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he now expects that the United Kingdom will ratify the biological diversity convention; and what outstanding obstacles there are to the ratification.

Mr. Yeo: We intend, with our EC partners, to ratify the convention on biological diversity by the end of 1993, given satisfactory progress towards securing safeguards against our concerns on the financial provisions of the convention.

Housing, Liverpool

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how much money will be spent by housing action trusts in Liverpool over the next five years.

Sir George Young: The HATs' spending plans for the next three years will be finalised once the current public expenditure survey has been completed. An external financing limit for 1994-95 and indicative EFLs for the subsequent two years of this survey period will be set next month.

Standard Spending Assessments

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if his Department takes into consideration EC objective 1 status when assessing levels of grant and standard spending assessment; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: Standard spending assessments are the Government's assessment of the appropriate amount of revenue expenditure by each local authority taking account of its physical, demographic and social characteristics. The calculation of SSAs take no account of the likely level of funding from European Community institutions.

Under arrangements agreed with the European Commission, my Department will provide public expenditure cover, in the form of supplementary credit approvals, automatically and in full, for forecast European regional development fund receipts arising on projects which fall within the "other services block", my Department's urban initiatives and projects for which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for National Heritage has the policy responsibility. To the extent that an authority chooses to use part of its allocation of basic credit approvals to provide matching funding within a project using ERDF grant, then the revenue consequences of these credit approvals will have been reflected in SSAs in the usual way.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what criteria are applied for assessing spending on *(a)* refuse collection, *(b)* environmental health and *(c)* planning; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: Refuse collection, environmental health and planning control are among those services included in the standard spending assessment for "All Other Services" at the district level. The formula for the distribution of resources for "All Other Services" is set out in the Local Government Finance Report (England) 1993-94 approved by Parliament in February 1993.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) if he will make it his policy to include *(a)* economic and *(b)* social deprivation indices in the standard spending assessment; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will make it his policy to base future standard spending assessments on research into the variations in spending needs between different authorities; and if he will make a statement;

(3) if he will make it his policy to include in the additional needs index a disability indicator of need in both special and ordinary schools; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: We have recently completed a review of the system of standard spending assessments. As part of the review we have considered the inclusion in standard spending assessments of a wide range of indicators, including measures of economic deprivation and disability. The existing system of standard spending assessments is based on statistical evidence and research into the factors which lead to variation in the costs faced by local authorities.

Proposals for standard spending assessments for 1994-95 will be announced later this autumn as part of the provisional revenue support grant settlement.

Poor-health Areas

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what criteria his Department applies when assessing the needs of areas of poor health; whether age is a factor; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: We have recently completed a review of the system of standard spending assessments. As part of the review we have considered the inclusion of a range of health indicators, including standard mortality ratios, taking account of variations in the age structure of the local population.

Work on the review has now finished and my right hon. Friend will announce the outcome later in the autumn as part of his proposals for revenue support grant for 1994-95.

Local Government Reform

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what estimates he has received from the Local Government Commission and the local authority associations of the transitional costs of local government reform in England.

Mr. Baldry: The Local Government Commission has included in its reports on each of the review areas in the first tranche, estimates of transitional costs associated with its recommendations. Neither the Association of District Councils nor the Association of County Councils has submitted estimates of any such costs. My officials have, however, been holding technical discussions with representatives of the ADC and ACC on the implications of local government reorganisation, including any potential transitional costs.

Council Tax

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what was the original estimate of the council tax base in Barnet and Wandsworth; and what is the latest estimate.

Mr. Baldry: The council tax bases used for the 1993-94 local government settlement, derived from the proposed valuation lists sent to the authorities between 15 November and 1 December 1992, were 128,281 and 105,392 band D2 adult equivalents for Barnet and Wandsworth respectively.

The latest estimates, derived from the valuation lists available to authorities on 7 June 1993, are 130,459 and 110,334 band D equivalents for Barnet and Wandsworth respectively.

Refrigerant Containers

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consultation his Department has undertaken with British aerosol manufacturers and users about the terms of the draft Environmental Protection (Non-Refillable Refrigerant Containers) Regulations.

Mr. Yeo: My Department issued a consultation paper in March 1992 setting out the proposals for these regulations. The British Aerosol Manufacturers Association (BAMA) was among the organisations consulted. Officials have since discussed the proposed regulations directly with representatives of BAMA.

Housing

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table for the latest available year showing for each local housing authority in England *(a)* the total amount of capital receipts, *(b)* the reserve proportion thereof, *(c)* numbers in temporary accommodation and *(d)* the cost of temporary accommodation, with totals for London boroughs, metropolitan boroughs, shire districts, and England.

Mr. Gummer: I have today placed in the Library of the House tables giving final figures of *(a)* total receipts and *(b)* reserved receipts for 1991-92 and corresponding provisional figures for 1992-93 for each local housing authority in England.

My Department does not collect information on the total numbers of those homeless households which have been placed by local authorities in temporary accommodation having been accepted by them as homeless, nor on the costs of the various types of temporary accommodation other than bed and breakfast accommodation.

Data on the total numbers of households placed in temporary accommodation and some data on the costs are, however, collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The latest information is for 1991-92 and is published in "Homelessness Statistics 1991-92 Actuals", a copy of which is in the Library.

Radiation

Dr. John Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what advice he has received from the National Radiological Protection Board on the annual collective dose of radiation worldwide from *(a)* background radiation, fallout and non-nuclear industry sources, *(b)* medical exposure and *(c)* the operation of the thermal oxide reprocessing plant; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what advice he has received from the National Radiological Protection Board on the annual collective dose of radiation to the whole United Kingdom population from all sources now; by what amount that dose would increase if THORP was operating; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: Details of the annual collective doses of radiation from all sources to the United Kingdom population are published in the National Radiation Protection Board's (NRPB) "Radiation Exposure of the UK Population—1993 Review". Information on the collective doses to the world's population from all sources is published in "Sources, Effects and Risks of Ionising Radiation UNSCEAR 1[illegible] Report to the General Assembly, United Nations". At the request of the Chief Medical Officer's Committee on the Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE), NRPB has published estimates of the collective doses arising from proposed Sellafield discharges. These calculations indicate that the operation of THORP would increase the annual collective dose to the United Kingdom population by less than 0·003 per cent. and the world's population by less than 0·0006 per cent. I am arranging for copies of these publications to be placed in the House Library.

Tower Blocks

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will place in the Library a list of tower blocks erected in England by local authorities for housing purposes, *(a)* currently in occupation or *(b)* demolished or awaiting demolition with details in the year in which approvals for construction and/or financing was given by his Department, and the number of dwellings in each block, where this occurred in 1963 and thereafter.

Mr. Gummer: The information requested is not collected by this Department.

Rents

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing for each financial year since 1978 the average unrebated rent for *(a)* local authority tenants, *(b)* housing association tenants for each local housing authority in England, with sub-totals for London boroughs, metropolitan boroughs, and shire districts, and England, in current prices, constant prices, and with a constant price index where 1978 equals 100.

Mr. Gummer: I have today placed in the Library a table showing the average local authority weekly unrebated rent for each housing authority for each financial year from 1988-89 to 1992-93, both at current and constant prices with the latter also expressed as an index with 1988-89 equal to 100. This information could only be provided for years before 1988-89 at disproportionate cost.

From 1978 to 1989 the information for housing association tenants can be found in the publication "Statistical Note for Rent Officers: Statistics of Rent Registrations by Rent Registration Area and Rent Assessment Committee Determinations by Panel Area". From 1990 the information on registered fair housing association rents can be found in the publication "Rent Officer Statistics"; information on new lettings by registered housing association can be found in the National Federation of Housing Associations' quarterly bulletin; and information on rents for the whole housing association stock can be found in the report "Housing Associations in 1992" published by the Housing Corporation.

Copies of all these publications are in the Library.

Housing, Newcastle

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the present strategic guidance for the provision of new dwellings in Tyne and Wear; what meetings have been held with the city of Newcastle upon Tyne on this matter; and what allowance has been made for the need for more student accommodation in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Mr. Baldry: The strategic guidance for Tyne and Wear, published in 1989, stated that the five unitary development plans should provide for a basic requirement of 30,100 dwellings to be built between the beginning of 1988 and the end of 2001. The necessity to review and roll forward this strategic guidance has been discussed at a number of meetings with officers from the city of Newcastle upon Tyne as part of a continuing dialogue. The need for more student accommodation in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne will be one of the factors taken into account when setting new guidelines for housebuilding beyond the year 2001.

House Renovation Grants

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what changes he proposes to make to the house renovation grant system following his recent consultation exercise.

Sir George Young: After considering the response to the consultation paper on the future of private housing renewal programmes, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales and I have today laid before the House Renovation Grant Limit Order, under which the upper limit for mandatory renovation grants to owners, tenants and landlords in England will be £20,000. The order will come into force on 14 January 1944. I propose no change, for the moment, to the Exchequer subsidy rate in England of 60 per cent. or to the test of applicants' resources.

The consultation paper included longer-term options which I am considering further. The Government's objective is to ensure that the resources available for private housing renewal are targeted effectively.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales is making an announcement today covering arrangements for Wales.

Air Pollution

Mr. Brandreth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what progress has been made in implementing the system of local authority air pollution control introduced under part 8 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Mr. Yeo: By the end of March this year, some 13,000 applications for authorisation had been received by local authorities, of which over 5,500 had been decided. Only 12 appeals were received by my Department during the first two years of operation of the new air pollution controls.

I am pleased to say that the evidence from the data that have been collected and from a review of 25 local authorities conducted by my Department is that local authorities are getting on well with tackling their new responsibilities. None the less, there remains a heavy workload to determine the outstanding applications and to ensure that the necessary improvement are made by operators.

Housing, Brent

Sir Rhodes Boyson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what progress has been made with the proposal for a housing action trust in Brent.

Sir George Young: I am pleased to announce that I have decided, after careful consideration of tenants' views and of the detailed feasibility study for the estate, that there should be a ballot of tenants on the proposal to establish a housing action trust for the Stonebridge estate in Brent. This is a further example of the Government's determination to tackle the problems of rundown estates and improve their management in close consultation with the people who live there.

I shall announce the ballot date in due course. In the meantime, further consultations with the tenants will take place, so that they can ask the questions and receive the answers which will enable them to understand the implications for them of the establishment of a housing action trust.

I have decided to appoint Mr. Tony Wade MBE and Mr. Clive Lloyd CBE, respectively, as prospective chairman and deputy chairman for the trust. They will carry forward the further consultations with tenants and help prepare for the major tasks which the housing action trust will undertake, if established.

Market Franchise Rights

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has had from Manchester city council in regard to proposals on market franchise rights; what reply he is sending; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 20 October 1993]:* We have received representations from the council objecting to the Government's proposals. The representations are being carefully considered along with other consultees' views.

Correspondence

Dr. John Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he intends to reply to the letters of 3 October and 14 October from Mr. N. T. P. Murphy, a constituent of the right hon. Member for Copeland, concerning Nirex.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* My officials replied to Mr. Murphy on 3 November 1993.

Urban Development Corporations

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing the total gross public spending for each year since 1981-82, and the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for the urban development corporations.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The urban development corporations' programmes are supported by grant in aid, receipts from their activities and receipts from the European Community. Actual grant in aid paid to the urban development corporations for each year from 1981-82 and the projected public expenditure plans to 1995-96, at 1992-93 prices, are set out in the table.

Year	*Actual expenditure £ million*
1981-82	37·1
1982-83	61·9
1983-84	94·8
1984-85	88·4
1985-86	81·9
1986-87	89·3
1987-88	[1]160·2
1988-89	254·7
1989-90	476·8
1990-91	607·5
1991-92	601·4
1992-93	515·8
	Public expenditure plans (1992-93 prices)
1993-94	349·2
1994-95	273·2
1995-96	255·3

[1] The figures include provision for the docklands light railway from 1987-88 onwards.

Urban Regeneration Agency

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96 in 1992-93 prices, for the Urban Regeneration Agency.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The Urban Regeneration Agency's programme will be supported by grant in aid, receipts from its activities and receipts from the European Community. As the agency has yet to be established, the receipts it may generate cannot be predicted accurately. Payments from the European Community will depend upon approval for projects under the European regional development fund community support frameworks which have yet to be determined. Public expenditure plans for the grant in aid to the Urban Regeneration Agency, derived from the 1993 departmental annual reports and expressed in 1992-93 prices, are set out in the table.

Public Expenditure Plans (1992-93 prices)

Year	*£ million*
1994-95	169
1995-96	190

HEALTH

Service Quality

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans she has to ensure that existing knowledge about effectiveness is used to improve service quality;

(2) how the Government's autumn initiative on quality in purchasing will ensure that existing knowledge about effectiveness is used to improve service quality.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health's research and development division has published its strategy, "Research for Health", part of which relates to the dissemination of existing knowledge on effectiveness of treatment. A unit that will provide a focal point for review and dissemination of research will shortly be set up.

In addition the Department has commissioned a series of effective health care bulletins. Each bulletin consists of a systematic review and synthesis of literature on clinical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and acceptability of health service interventions. These bulletins are designed to aid purchasers in drawing up effective contracts.

As part of the national health service research and development programme, the Cochrane centre has been set up in Oxford, to establish a database of controlled trials, and to provide an information service.

The Department of Health's central health outcomes unit and the United Kingdom outcomes clearing house in Leeds have been set up to develop and promote the assessment of outcome of services. A recently published departmental consultation document on population health outcome indicators is based on the collation of existing knowledge about effectiveness.

In addition clinical audit has been established whereby procedures used for diagnosis, care and treatment are compared against standards of proven effectiveness, with the aim of improving quality of patient care. As a part of this, the health professionals are currently working with the Department to develop nationally agreed guidelines, based on knowledge about effectiveness and appropriateness of services, for use in purchasing high-quality care.

Copies of these documents will be placed in the Library.

NHS Race Unit

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the remit of the new NHS race unit; what are its planned staffing level and budget; and where it is to be sited.

Mr. Sackville: The remit of the national health service ethnic health unit is described in the executive letter sent to NHS general managers and chief executives—EL(93)89, —copies of which will be placed in the Library. The letter explains that the unit is being set up

"to help to ensure that black people and people from different ethnic backgrounds derive full benefit from the Health of the Nation strategy, from local health purchasing policies, the Patient's Charter, the Care in the Community initiatives and the developing role of primary care".

The unit will begin operation this November and will have a budget of £500,000 for the remainder of the financial year and a staff complement of not more than six people. Since the unit will be directly accountable to the NHS Management Executive, it, too, will be based in Leeds.

Smoking

Mrs. Wise: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the projects commissioned since 1975 by her Department and by its predecessor Department to evaluate methods of getting smokers to give up smoking; if she will list for each project the name and institution of the principal investigator and the titles of the reports in which the findings were published; and if she will place a copy of each report in the Library.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health and its predecessor has participated in a number of programmes of basic social/behavioural research on factors affecting smoking habits, and several large, ad hoc research studies. These provide a wealth of information on which more specific, targeted smoking cessation interventions are based.

A list of the studies will be placed in the Library.

The studies are listed and those marked* were concerned specifically with the evaluation of smoking cessation interventions. Also listed are three specific evaluation projects which are currently in planning.

Mrs. Wise: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the projects commissioned since 1975 by the Health Education Authority and its predecessor, the Health Education Council, to evaluate methods of getting smokers to give up smoking, and for each project the name and institution of the principal investigator and the titles of the reports in which the findings were published; and if she will place a copy of each report in the Library.

Mr. Sackville: Little of the research work of the Health Education Authority or its predecessor the Health Education Council has been specifically devoted to evaluation of smoking cessation interventions but many of the studies carried out by or on behalf of these bodies

contain information on the social/behaviourial factors affecting smoking habits. They therefore form the basis for specific targeted smoking cessation interventions.

A full list of Health Education Council and Health Education Authority publications on smoking will be placed in the Library.

Nuclear Emergency Planning

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance has been issued to health authorities on their expected role in nuclear emergency planning and the distribution of potassium iodate tablets; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The Department's guidance to English health authorities on their role in nuclear emergency planning is contained in the circular HC(89)8 and its annex, copies of which are available in the Library. Earlier this month, the circular was amended to include revised guidance to health authorities on planning for the distribution of potassium iodate tablets for use in the event of a nuclear emergency. Copies of this amendment will be placed in the Library.

Mr. P. B. Horsburgh

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what date Mr. P. B. Horsburgh will relinquish his position as chairman of the Doncaster Healthcare NHS trust; what reasons he gave for leaving his post; what position within the national health service he will be taking up; if he will be eligible for severance pay; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: Mr. Peter Horsburgh's appointment as chairman of the Doncaster Healthcare national health service trust ends on 30 November 1993. He has no appointment pending to any other non-executive post in the region. Severance pay is not appropriate.

GP Fund Holders

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action she will take regarding the waiting time policy being operated by the George Eliot hospital, Nuneaton, with respect to general practitioner fund holders;

(2) what measures she will take to prevent disparities in waiting time developing between fund-holding and non-fund-holding practices in the Coventry and Warwickshire area.

Dr. Mawhinney: Joint guidance—EL(91)84—issued by the Department and the profession, copies of which will be placed in the Library, makes it clear that contracts offered to one purchaser should not disadvantage the patients of another. National health service managers are responsible for ensuring that this guidance is implemented locally. The George Eliot hospital is meeting its contracts with the district health authority. General practitioner fund holders, like all purchasers, are free to purchase spare hospital capacity, on behalf of their patients, where this is available.

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will provide details of the number of fund-holding general practitioners in each of the London boroughs in terms of numbers and as a percentage of general practitioners.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the number and percentage of general practitioner fund holders that have spent more than their budgets for 1992-93.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information will not be available until final accounts have been audited and the information collected at the end of November.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the items general practitioner fund holders can spend their savings on.

Dr. Mawhinney: The purposes for which general practitioner fund holder savings may be used are clearly set out in regulation 24 of the National Health Service (Fund-holding Practices) Regulations 1993, Statutory Instrument No. 567 1993, copies of which are available in the Library.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the extent to which general practitioner fund-holding patients are being treated ahead of non-fundholding patients with the same clinical need.

Dr. Mawhinney: All emergencies are treated immediately.

Joint guidance issued by the Department and the profession—EL(91)84—and a letter from the national health service chief executive about urgent issues dated 22 February 1993 require hospitals to hold common waiting lists for urgent and seriously ill patients and to give urgent cases priority within local timescales. NHS managers and clinicians are responsible for implementing this guidance locally. Copies of the guidance, and the executive letter, will be placed in the Library.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the number of general practitioners and general practitioner fund holders who own their premises.

Dr. Mawhinney: The information is not available centrally on which such an estimate could be based.

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her oral statement of 21 October, *Official Report*, columns 398-400, if she will make a statement on the role and position of general practitioner fund holders within the restructured NHS.

Dr. Mawhinney: General practitioner fund holding has been one of the major successes of the reformed national health service. More than 6,000 GPs in 1,200 practices are now fund holders. From next April, over a third of the population will be served by fund-holding GPs. This reflects the real achievements in improving patient care. The new arrangements for district health authorities and family health services authorities will not undermine the role of GP fund holders in providing a competitive edge in purchasing.

Cold-related Diseases

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Britain died of cold-related diseases in each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available.

VAT (Domestic Fuel)

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will conduct an analysis of the health implications of VAT on fuel.

Mr. Sackville: No. We are aware of analysis aimed at predicting the effect on household consumption of fuel, and of evidence concerning the effect on health of variation in domestic ambient temperatures. It is not possible, however, to combine these data to make any reliable inference about the health consequences of change in the cost of fuel.

Disciplinary Procedures

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures exist in hospital trusts to ensure proper examination of wrongful or inappropriate conduct of consultants and other senior clinical staff.

Dr. Mawhinney: Trusts are required to follow the existing arrangements in relation to the handling of clinical complaints against national health service consultants and other senior clinical staff set out in departmental circular HC(88)37, copies of which are available in the Library. It is for trusts to establish arrangements for investigating other allegations of misconduct by consultants or other senior clinical staff.

Osteoporosis

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets she has for the reduction in osteoporosis; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: None specifically. However, alongside specific interventions such as hormone replacement therapy, available through general practitioners and clinics, important measures which should help reduce the incidence of osteoporosis include increasing levels of physical activity, cutting down excess alcohol, avoiding cigarette smoking, and eating a balanced diet. We are promoting all these lifestyle measures through the health strategy "The Health of the Nation", a copy of which is available in the Library.

Patient Expenditure

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what increase in patient expenditure is experienced within the NHS during January to March, over that of the months from July to September.

Mr. Sackville: From the information available to the Department, we estimate that hospital and community health services expenditure in the months of January, February and March 1993 was between 4 and 5 per cent. higher than that in the months of July, August and September 1992. The hon. Member should note that this information is based on unaudited management information as the audited accounts of health authorities do not include the figures required.

Consultants

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the annual cost of the distinction award system for hospital consultants; and what plans she has to increase openness and public accountability for the scheme.

Dr. Mawhinney: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 27 October at column *694*.

Chrysoidine

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is her policy on the use of the maggot dye chrysoidine and the link between it and cancer.

Mr. Sackville: The Committee on the Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment considered the dye chrysoidine up to 1985. On the last occasion, the committee reaffirmed its earlier advice that it would be prudent for anglers who wanted to use chrysoidine to avoid skin contact with the dye. The Government conveyed this advice to the National Federation of Anglers and the angling press at that time.

Winter Hospital Admissions

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage increase in patient admissions occurs in the winter months, January to March, as opposed to the summer months, July to September.

Mr. Sackville: Providers reported that in 1992-93 the number of finished consultant episodes in the general and acute specialties in January to March was about 3 per cent. higher than in July to September.

Surgery (Consent)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance is in force laying out the procedures doctors and surgeons should carry out if they discover cases where they have reason to believe informed consent for radical surgery has not been obtained; and who has the responsibility of ensuring those procedures are properly carried out in *(a)* directly managed units and *(b)* hospital trusts.

Mr. Sackville: It is for doctors and health professionals themselves to ensure that valid consent is obtained from their patients for any treatment proposed. The common law requirement for consent is reflected in guidance issued by the National Health Service Management Executive and by health professionals' own ethical codes. Treatment of a patient capable of giving consent, without obtaining consent, could leave health professionals, health authorities or trusts open to legal action.

Individual members of staff in the NHS have a right and duty to raise with their employer any matters of concern they may have about health service issues concerned with the delivery of care to a patient in their authority, trust or unit. Guidance issued to the NHS, EL(93)51, copies of which are available in the Library, recommends that local policies and procedures be introduced to allow these rights and duties to be fully and properly met.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines she regards as being in force for the obtaining of informed consent for radical surgery.

Mr. Sackville: Guidance on consent to examination and treatment was issued to the national health service by the NHS Management Executive in August 1990, HC(90)22, copies of which are available in the Library. It advises that patients have the right under common law to give or withhold consent. Sufficient information must be given to patients to ensure that they understand the nature, consequences and any substantial risks of the treatment proposed.

Diabetes

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the extent to which there is a shortage of specialist dieticians to counter diabetes; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The numbers of dieticians working in the national health service has grown from 1,140 in 1987 to 1,410 in 1992. It is for purchasers and providers to determine the numbers of dieticians required to provide an effective service to people with diabetes.

Suicide

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support is being given to voluntary organisations to meet the target set in the "Health of the Nation" regarding the rate of suicide.

Mr. Bowis: In the mental illness field, more than 40 grants are being made to some 28 voluntary bodies at a total cost of £2 million in 1992-93. Most of these organisations provide help and support for mentally ill people in the community and make a contribution towards meeting our "Health of the Nation" target to reduce the rate of suicide.

Nebulisers

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to make the prescriptions of nebulisers available on the NHS; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: Hand-operated nebulisers are already available on general practitioner prescription and powered nebulisers may be prescribed by consultants for patients in hospital and in the community. No changes are planned in these arrangements.

Welfare Milk Tokens

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when welfare milk tokens ceased to be valid for exchange for soya, goat's, fully skimmed and long-life milks; and what were the reasons for the change.

Mr. Sackville: There has been no recent change in the products available under the welfare food scheme. Milk tokens have never been valid for soya, goat's or fully skimmed milk. Long life—UHT—milk is obtainable for milk tokens.

Perioperative Deaths

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to require all surgeons and anaesthetists to provide audit data for national confidential inquiry into perioperative death.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 28 October at column *766*. We strongly support the participation of all clinicians in medical audit and in national confidential inquiries, but to be effective we believe that this must be done on a voluntary basis. All surgeons and anaesthetists are encouraged to take part in the national confidential inquiry into perioperative deaths by their respective royal colleges.

Mr. Batiste: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the Government's response to the report of the national confidential inquiry into perioperative deaths published in September.

Mr. Sackville: We have welcomed the report of the national confidential enquiry into perioperative deaths—NCEPOD—and its general conclusion that across the range of specialties covered, patients can rely on excellent standards. The report acknowledges that progress has been made to resolve a number of problems identified in earlier enquiries and provides important messages about high standards of surgical and anaesthetic care in this country. We are committed to a programme of work to improve the quality of patient information, including the development of a single patient identifier to provide a means for health event linkage.

Through careful assessment of clinical standards this enquiry helps to ensure that the medical profession retains a critical approach to its work. The Government wish to encourage all surgeons and anaesthetists to continue to support NCEPOD, and national health service managers and the profession to act on the results. We expect all doctors to participate in peer review activities, and we provide continuing financial support for medical and clinical audit, as well as for NCEPOD. In these ways doctors can develop confidence in their clinical performance and identify areas where they can further develop their expertise.

NHS Management

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her oral answer of 26 October, *Official Report*, column 678, what percentage of the total cost is represented by *(a)* the management allowance for general practitioner budget holders, *(b)* the administrative costs to the FHSA, DHA, trusts, RHA, management executive and her Department, and *(c)* the computer allowance for fund holders.

Dr. Mawhinney: On average, the management allowance represents 2·1 per cent. of general practitioner fundholder budgets and the average computer reimbursement costs associated with managing a fund are 0·5 per cent. Administration costs of other national health service bodies associated with fund holding are not identified separately.

Generic Prescribing

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the cost per prescription of packaging generic drugs in the same way as branded drugs.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

Ms. Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to ensure that generically prescribed drugs have the same information for patients as brand prescribed drugs.

Dr. Mawhinney: The United Kingdom labelling and leaflet regulations apply equally to all licensed medicines. Labels and patient information leaflets supplied with generically prescribed medicines will have to contain all the information required by regulations.

Regional Health Authorities

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultation she intends to undertake, pursuant to her oral statement of 21 October, *Official Report*, columns 398-400, on proposals to reduce the number of regional health authorities from 14 to eight from 1 April 1994.

Mrs. Virginia Bottomley: A consultation document has been published setting out my proposals to determine new national health service regions and to establish eight new regional health authorities to replace the existing 14. The consultation document is being sent to all Members of Parliament, NHS bodies, community health councils, local authorities, health service trade unions and other interested organisations. Copies will also be placed in the Library. The consultation document invites views on the proposals by 15 January 1994.

Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she gave permission for the construction of a multi-storey car park at the RVI Hospital Trust, Newcastle; how much capital she has made available and in which financial years; and whether this is included in the capital programme of the Leayes wing at the RVI Trust.

Mr. Sackville: Permission for the construction of a multi-storey car park at the Royal Victoria infirmary and Associated Hospitals national health service trust has not yet been granted.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what capital resources she has committed and in respect of which financial years for the unification of opthalmology services at the RVI Trust Newcastle; what sums have been committed; and what plans she has to review this commitment in the light of proposals that may emerge from the current review of Newcastle hospital services by the Newcastle district health authority.

Dr. Mawhinney: Capital funds of £7·6 million have been committed to the unification of ophthalmology services at the Royal Victoria Infirmary and Associated Hospitals national health service trust. The funds are phased over two years, with completion of the scheme in 1995. To date, £244,000 has been committed for planning costs.

Proposals following the outcome of the review of acute services in Newcastle by Newcastle district health authority are awaited.

NHS Corporate Governance Review Panel

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the membership, date of appointment and remuneration and other allowable expenses of the NHS corporate governance review panel, together with other positions within the NHS that each member holds.

Dr. Mawhinney: I refer the hon. Member to the reply my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Canterbury (Mr. Brazier) on 12 July at columns *386-87*. Members of the corporate governance task force are not remunerated for the assistance they are giving, but travel and subsistence expenses are payable at civil service rates. The members of the four working groups of the task force and their other positions are as listed.

Group 1: Public Service Values

Sir Bryan Askew (Chairman)
Chairman: Yorkshire Regional Health Authority

Andrew Wall
Senior Fellow: Health Services Management Centre, Birmingham University

Anthony Merifield
Head of Public Appointments: Cabinet Office

Chris Vellenoweth
Special Projects Advisor: National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts

Rabbi Julia Neuberger
Chairman: Camden and Islington Community Health Services National Health Service Trust

Ann Kelly
Non-executive: Royal Berkshire and Battle NHS Trust

Laurie Caple
Chief Executive: Northumbria Ambulance Services NHS Trust

Group 2: Matching The Roles and Functions of Chairmen and Non Executive Directors with their Part Time Commitment

Dr. Stuart Burgess (Chairman)
Chairman: Oxford RHA

Professor Chris Ham
Director: Health Services Management Centre, Birmingham University

Steven Campion
Performance Manager: Wessex RHA

Elspeth Metcalfe
Chairman: Hereford and Worcester FHSA

Roger Hoyle
National Health Service Management Executive Outpost Director: South Western

Dr. Charlotte Williamson
Vice Chairman: York Health Services NHS Trust

Derek Smith
Chief Executive: Kings Healthcare NHS Trust

Group 3: Induction and Training of Chairmen, Non-Executive Director and Boards as a Whole

Mike Marchment (Chairman)
Chief Executive: Premier Health NHS Trust

Michael West
Occupational Psychologist: Sheffield University

John Spiers
Chairman: Brighton Healthcare NHS Trust

Angela Sealey
Chairman: Basingstoke and North Hampshire Health Authority

Stuart Haywood
Chairman: of the Committee of Management, The Retreat Hospital, York

Philip Hunt
Director: National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts

Dr. Tina Townsend
Director: NHS Training Directorate

Group 4: Finance and Performance Reporting

Ken Punt (Chairman)

Senior Fellow and Head of Centre for Healthcare Financial Management: Health Services Management Unit
John Sherring
Regional Director: Audit Commission, West Midlands
Jane Wesson
Non-executive Director: Wakefield Health Authority
Paul Lilley
Director of Finance: East Gloucestershire NHS Trust
Simon Cussons
Chairman: Macclesfield HA

Viral Haemorrhagic Fever

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what provision she has made for viral haemorrhagic fever; at what locations in-patient provision against the possibility of this condition has been made; and at which locations in the last five years such provision has been discontinued.

Mr. Sackville: Patients with, or with suspected, viral haemorrhagic fever, are treated in high security infectious disease units; these units are funded directly by the Department of Health. There is presently one such unit with provision for four patients per year at Coppetts Wood hospital, north London. Discussions on the possibility of upgrading a similar unit in Newcastle are presently taking place. A unit at Fazakerley hospital in Liverpool closed in 1992.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what dedicated in-patient provision has been made for the treatment of HIV/AIDS; at which locations such provision has been made; and what additional in-patient provision she expects to make.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally. Funding for the treatment and care of people with HIV and AIDS is included in the revenue funding allocated to regional health authorities each year. Regions and health districts then determine the type and level of service provision in the light of local needs and circumstances.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what capital investment has been made, or is committed, into the HIV/AIDS infectious diseases complex at Newcastle general hospital; and when any new or refurbished facilities are expected to open;

(2) what were the capital and other costs associated with the Scids immune deficiency unit at Newcastle general hospital; how many patients this unit is expected to treat each year; and when it is expected to open.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally. The hon. Member may wish to contact Mr. Crute, the chairman of Newcastle health authority, for further details.

Radium Treatment

Mr. Couslas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued on the decommissioning of sites and buildings where high-dose radium treatment machines have been installed; what the planned life of such machines is expected to be; how long after the use of such machines has ceased she expects to wait before decommissioning can begin; and whether sites and buildings containing such defunct machinery will require extra security.

Mr. Sackville: Radium has been replaced as a radioactive source in radiotherapy machines by safer materials such as cobalt and iridium. Hospitals using such sources are registered with Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution—Department of the Environment—who provide guidance on safe handling. Replacement or removal of sources is carried out by approved contractors as part of the national disposal service. Hospitals also appoint local radiation protection advisers who implement the requirements of the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1985. Expected equipment lifetimes can be at least 15 years with a further 10 years maintenance support if required. However, existing machines are now being replaced by linear accelerators, which generate treatment beams without the need for radioactive sources and pose no radiation hazard when turned off. The existing disposal service imposes no undue delays or risk of contamination of premises.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the number of control assistants, using whole-time equivalents, for each ambulance service in each year since 1990.

Mr. Sackville: The information available is shown in the table. Separate figures for control assistants are not available centrally.

Control assistants and ambulance officers at 30 September (whole-time equivalents by region)

	1990	1991	1992
England Total	2,780	2,340	2,390
Northern region	180	170	180
Yorkshire region	240	220	220
Trent region	290	280	270
East Anglian region	130	130	120
North West Thames region	80	40	40
North East Thames region	70	70	70
South East Thames region	80	120	120
South West Thames region	100	100	100
Wessex region	140	140	140
Oxford region	130	130	130
South Western region	220	220	220
West Midlands region	340	260	320
Mersey region	120	90	90
North Western region	240	200	170
London ambulance service	410	170	210

Notes:

1. Separate figures for control assistants and ambulance officers are not available centrally. These two groups of ambulance staff are aggregated for central pay information purposes.
2. The figures include staff in ambulance trusts.
3. Figures for individual ambulance services are not available centrally.
4. The figure shown for Northern region in 1991 is a corrected one from previously published figures.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
6. Figures fell between 1990 and 1991 due largely to a number of ambulance officers taking up separate senior manager terms as well as a reduction in control assistants in response to a fall in the need for patient transport services in the London ambulance service.

Sources:

For 1990: the Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.
For 1991 and 1992: the Department of Health form KM49.

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the number of ambulance staff in England employed by the NHS in 1990, 1991 and 1992, using whole-time equivalents.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 21 October 1993]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

	1990	1991	1992
Ambulance Staff in National Health Service Employing Authorities and Trusts	18,130	17,630	17,680

All figures are at 30 September and are rounded to the nearest 10. Figures fell between 1990 and 1991 due largely to a number of ambulance officers taking up separate senior manager terms and a fall in the demand for Patient Transport Services in the London Ambulance Service.

Sources:

For 1990: Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.
For 1991 and 1992: Department of Health form KM 49.

Note: The figure shown for 1991 is a corrected one from previously published figures.

Ministers' Overseas Journeys

Mr. Roy Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what journeys abroad, involving public expenditure, she and other Ministers in the Department have made since 9 April 1992; what were the dates of the journeys and the places visited; what was the purpose of the journey in each case; by whom the Minister was accompanied, and what additional public expenditure was involved; and what was the total cost of each journey made abroad by each Minister.

Dr. Mawhinney *[holding answer 26 October 1993]:* The information available is shown in the table:

Date of journeys	Places visited	Purpose of visit	Accompanying officials	Total departmental expenditure £
Overseas visits by Secretary of State				
4-5 May 1992	Geneva	WHO Meeting of Ministers	1	691
14-15 May 1992	Brussels	EC Health Council Meeting of Ministers	3	1,167
3 August 1992	Copenhagen	United Kingdom EC Presidency Ministers Meeting	2	1,335
20 September 1992	Madrid	United Kingdom EC Presidency Ministers Meeting	2	1,385

Date of journeys	Places visited	Purpose of visit	Accompanying officials	Total departmental expenditure £
13-14 October 1992	Cologne Holland	United Kingdom EC Presidency Health Ministers Meeting	2	857
12-13 November 1992	Brussels	EC Health Council Meeting of Ministers	1	1,867
3 March 1993	Copenhagen	WHO Ministers Meeting	3	2,557
3-8 April 1993	Russia, Kazakhstan	Trade Mission	5	3,543
7-17 September 1993	Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Perth, Sydney, Hong Kong	Trade Mission—Health Care Industries	4	[1]31,000
18 October 1993	Brussels	To promote London as a site for the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMEA)	3	[1]1,200
Overseas visits by Minister for Health				
5 October 1992	Dublin	United Kingdom EC Presidency Health Ministers Meetings	Private Secretary	501
12-13 October 1992	Brussels, Rome	United Kingdom EC Presidency Health Ministers Meeting	1	1,010
18 October 1992	Larnaca	10th Commonwealth Private Secretary Health Ministers Conference	1	2,825
12-13 November 1992	Brussels	EC Health Council Meeting of Ministers	1	547
26-27 May 1993	Brussels	EC Health Council Meeting of Ministers	1	873
Overseas Visits by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Health) (Mr. Sackville)				
17 June 1993	Milan (Lombardy)	Promoting United Kingdom waste incineration products and to bid for United Kingdom siting of European Medicines Evaluation Agency	1	611
Overseas Visits by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Community) (Mr. Bowis)				
30 March 1993[2]	Paris	To address a conference on Management issues in Psychiatry sponsored by British drugs industry	1	574
29 August-5 September 1993	South Africa	Trade Mission to promote British Medical Industry (Health Promotion)	2	[1]11,500
12-19 September 1993	United States of America and Canada	Mental Health—Fact finding tour	3	[1]19,000
14 October 1993	Paris	Meeting of EC Council of Ministers for Social Affairs	1	[1]574
Overseas Visits by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Lords) (Baroness Cumberlege)				
7-8 December 1992	Paris	OECD Ministers' Meeting	1	794
7-17 September 1993	United States of America	Fact finding visit in connection with Ministerial responsibilities	2	[1]17,000

[1] Estimated cost.
[2] Mr. Yeo.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the cost of employing management consultants to assist in her Department's assessment of applications for trust status in each wave; how many assessments took place; and which were the consultants concerned.

Dr. Mawhinney *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The information is shown in the table. Information on the number and cost of the fourth wave assessment is provisional as the process is not yet complete.

Wave	Cost £	Number of assessments	Lead management consultants
1	601,340	66	Coopers & Lybrand
2	601,013	113	Coopers & Lybrand
3	452,375	155	KPMG
4	275,000	147	Touche Ross

TRANSPORT

Newcastle Western Bypass

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many payments have been paid under section 7 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 to property owners in the vicinity of the Newcastle western bypass north of the Stamfordham road interchange; what total sum has been paid; and when the last payment was made.

Mr. Key: No compensation is payable under section 7 of the Land Compensation Act 1973. However, compensation payments made due to the works on Newcastle western bypass north of the Stamfordham road interchange under the other provisions of part I of the Act is as follows:

Number of payments made: 1,051
Total sum of compensation: £1,845,040
Last payment made: 27 October 1993

Proposed East-west Route

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on *(a)* the present stage of preparation and estimated timetable for completion and *(b)* the latest estimate of cost of the (i) Braintree-A12, (ii) Stansted-Braintree, (iii) A1-Stansted, (iv) A5-A1, (v) Leighton Linslade bypass, (vi) Wing bypass, (vii) west of Aylesbury-Wing bypass and (viii) M40-west of Aylesbury stages of the proposed east-west route.

Mr. Key: Most of the schemes which comprise the east-west route are at early stages in their development. It is difficult to be certain of the programme and cost. The latest planning data are as follows and are subject to the availability of funding and completion of statutory procedures.

(i) Braintree-A12: public consultation early 1994. Cost £39 million—all costs area at Q1/92 prices.
(ii) Stansted-Braintree: awaiting decision following public inquiry. Cost £68·5 million.
(iii and iv) A5-Stansted—includes A5-A1 and A1-Stansted: public consultation autumn 1994. Completion year 2001. Cost £462·1 million.
(v) Leighton Linslade bypass: opened to traffic November 1991. Cost £22 million.
(vi) Wing bypass: decision following planning inquiry expected shortly. Cost £15 million.
(vi) West of Aylesbury to Wing bypass: public consultation period just completed. Decision about preferred route expected in 1994. Cost £97 million.
(vii) M40-west of Aylesbury: no decisions have been made whether or when schemes will enter the trunk roads programme.

Transport Supplementary Grant

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the value of the bids for transport supplementary grant 1994-95 which he has received from individual local authorities in their transport policy and programmes submissions within the following categories, dividing each total bid into the amounts for *(a)* major road schemes, *(b)* structural carriageway maintenance and *(c)* structural bridge maintenance.

Mr. MacGregor: The information is as follows.

Bids for transport supplementary grant—1994-95

Authority	Major schemes £k	Structural maintenance: Principal road carriageways £k	Structural maintenance: Bridges £k	Total TSG bid £k
City of London	0	0	1,106	1,106
Barking and Dagenham	5,017	587	250	5,854
Barnet	0	200	498	698
Bexley	5,614	1,250	970	7,834
Brent	190	1,013	1,249	2,452
Bromley	497	640	344	1,481
Camden	0	1,773	3,085	4,858
Croydon	6,440	2,263	181	8,884
Ealing	1,525	571	372	2,468
Enfield	3,889	404	2,492	6,785
Greenwich	1,615	708	708	3,031
Hackney	1,418	1,013	1,700	4,131
Hammersmith and Fulham	0	1,045	2,255	3,300
Haringey	990	1,544	700	3,234
Harrow	7,551	416	953	8,920
Havering	0	72	563	635
Hillingdon	2,630	364	2,210	5,204
Hounslow	3,159	540	937	4,636
Islington	0	1,220	715	1,935
Kensington and Chelsea	538	166	36	740
Kingston upon Thames	3,992	700	567	5,259
Lambeth	0	630	936	1,566
Lewisham	8,552	300	260	9,112
Merton	685	222	110	1,017
Newham	3,808	70	6,526	10,404
Redbridge	0	705	1,310	2,015
Richmond upon Thames	0	260	515	775
Southwark	2,413	500	430	3,343
Sutton	800	210	468	1,478

Authority	Structural maintenance			Total TSG bid £k
	Major schemes £k	Principal road carriageways £k	Bridges £k	
Tower Hamlets	400	6,750	549	7,699
Waltham Forest	1,167	330	2275	1,772
Wandsworth	0	1,000	3,996	4,996
Westminster	10,684	442	4,552	15,678
Bolton	1,378	1,150	2,477	5,005
Bury	0	962	1,200	2,162
Manchester	28,425	2,544	2,879	33,848
Oldham	3,080	980	3,050	7,110
Rochdale	35	960	2,200	3,195
Salford	5,289	1,540	900	7,729
Stockport	1,550	1,527	3,348	6,425
Tameside	2,070	1,500	765	4,335
Trafford	21,661	312	464	22,437
Wigan	1,127	750	580	2,457
Knowsley	17,600	1,021	550	19,171
Liverpool	2,450	2,200	1,000	5,650
St. Helens	5,039	150	277	5,466
Sefton	1,362	194	853	2,409
Wirral	2,835	318	750	3,903
Barnsley	4,522	1,128	1,092	6,742
Doncaster	8,475	1,521	1,739	11,735
Rotherham	3,700	629	2,272	6,601
Sheffield	13,389	4,270	4,871	22,530
Gateshead	500	300	400	1,200
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	12,236	2,156	429	14,821
North Tyneside	400	1,450	680	2,530
South Tyneside	10	886	660	1,556
Sunderland	6,690	2,600	1,051	10,341
Birmingham	34,504	6,000	3,420	43,924
Coventry	12,645	534	922	14,101
Dudley	11,822	2,000	946	14,768
Sandwell	4,107	2,953	4,453	11,513
Solihull	2,599	180	410	3,189
Walsall	10,992	1,297	3,455	15,744
Wolverhampton	14,554	2,305	6,200	23,059
Bradford	4,545	3,000	3,962	11,507
Calderdale	2,897	3,796	1,464	8,157
Kirklees	97	4,370	1,949	6,416
Leeds	19,813	7,140	2,527	29,480
Wakefield	5,110	2,370	1,343	8,823
Avon	22,814	3,220	2,980	29,014
Bedfordshire	5,263	1,350	2,204	8,817
Berkshire	20,628	2,995	1,300	24,923
Buckinghamshire	6,069	2,476	755	9,300
Cambridgeshire	2,627	3,859	3,439	9,925
Cheshire	16,908	12,480	4,565	33,953
Cleveland	9,655	2,763	1,495	13,913
Cornwall	8,192	3,310	3,000	14,502
Cumbria	3,110	3,000	2,750	8,860
Derbyshire	2,960	2,175	2,016	7,151
Devon	7,565	6,845	2,663	17,073
Dorset	3,300	1,500	1,250	6,050
Durham	9,935	1,750	2,176	13,861
East Sussex	9,009	3,946	2,233	15,188
Essex	18,966	5,500	3,616	28,082
Gloucestershire	8,070	2,593	1,474	12,137
Hampshire	28,228	8,262	2,614	39,104
Hereford and Worcester	1,539	3,441	1,574	6,554
Hertfordshire	8,970	3,900	3,450	16,320
Humberside	11,062	5,041	2,784	18,887
Isle of Wight	0	780	310	1,090
Kent	105,776	12,783	3,650	122,209
Lancashire	27,691	7,007	13,198	47,896
Leicestershire	7,326	3,909	2,644	13,879
Lincolnshire	3,025	2,430	2,600	8,055
Norfolk	9,286	5,383	6,189	20,858
Northamptonshire	6,253	5,301	1,920	13,474
Northumberland	7,708	3,500	2,980	14,188
North Yorkshire	13,385	8,176	4,160	25,721
Nottinghamshire	6,373	5,645	2,612	14,630
Oxfordshire	3,301	2,799	1,619	8,716
Shropshire	4,982	3,308	2,118	10,408
Somerset	9,367	2,604	3,510	15,481
Staffordshire	12,296	8,000	2,000	22,296
Suffolk	8,543	5,000	3,700	17,243

Authority	Structural maintenance: Major schemes £k	Principal road carriageways £k	Bridges £k	Total TSG bid £k
Surrey	27,072	6,219	8,791	42,082
Warwickshire	495	3,370	2,605	6,470
West Sussex	9,863	2,800	700	13,363
Wiltshire	2,889	2,308	275	5,472

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provision he has made in his Department's budget for the proposed west of Aylesbury-Wing bypass for compensation payments to householders whose homes would be reduced in value or otherwise affected by his Department's plans.

Mr. Key: No provision has yet been put aside for compensation. For planning purposes, a sum of £5·3 million—Q1/92 prices—has been esimated for the cost of land and properties including compensation.

Persons who would be directly affected by the route of the bypass would be able to make a case for the purchase of their property under blight terms once a preferred route has been decided and protected.

Persons who consider that the physical effects of public traffic using the new road once opened would affect the value of their property may make a claim against the Department under part I of the Land Compensation Act 1973. The claim period would commence one year after the new road opened to traffic.

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the names by local highway authority of the major road schemes for which the authority is bidding for transport supplementary grant to enable main works to start during 1994-95.

Mr. MacGregor: Following are the bids received for such schemes in the current round:

Authority	Scheme name
Enfield	Genotin road link
Greenwich	Woolwich road improvement
Harrow	Sheepcote road widening
Kingston	Kingston north-south strategy—A240 corridor
Tower Hamlets	Poplar traffic calming area scheme
Westminster	Vauxhall bridge road improvement
Manchester	Hyde road (Tameside-West Gorton)
Manchester	Inner relief route—Regent road-Chester road—phase 2, stage 2
Oldham	A62/A627 Oldham way improvements
Salford	Trafford road—the Quays-White City
Trafford	Trafford road improvement
Trafford	Bridgewater boulevard
St. Helens	Blackbrook diversion
Sefton	Merseyside N corridor stage 1 Switch island/ Thornton link
Sefton	Merseyside N corridor stage 2 Thornton link/ Blundell link
Wirral	Heron road/Saughall Massie road improvement/ diversion
Doncaster	A630 Wheatley Hall road
Sunderland	Grangetown and Ryhope bypass
Birmingham	Lichfield road improvement phase 2
Birmingham	South Birmingham improvements—phase 1—A34 and A435
Dudley	A4036 improvement Merry Hill
Sandwell	Churchbridge improvement Sandwell
Sandwell	Expressway/All Saints way junction Sandwell
Wolverhampton	Willenhall road improvements phase 3
Calderdale	Brighouse Elland road/Brookfoot lane improvement
Kirklees	Huddersfield ring road improvements phase 4
Leeds	Leeds Harewood bridge bypass
Leeds	Leeds guided bus—A61/A64
Leeds	Leeds city centre loop road—phases 3 and 4
Wakefield	Hemsworth bypass
Wakefield	Normanton bypass
Avon	Avon ring road 2—B4465 Shortwood to A420 Warmley
Avon	Park and ride—Bristol-site 2 Bath-site 3
Bedfordshire	Arlesey/Stotfold bypass
Berkshire	Reading Cross town route stage 2 broken brow to Vastern road
Berkshire	Reading Cross town route stage 3 Caversham road to Portman road
Berkshire	Reading A4 Bath road widening/dualling
Berkshire	Stafferton way link Maidenhead
Buckinghamshire	Wendover bypass
Cambridgeshire	Needingworth bypass
Cambridgeshire	Werrington to Glinton bypass—phase 2
Cheshire	Davenham bypass
Cheshire	Wheelock bypass
Cleveland	Skelton and Brotton bypass
Cleveland	Middleton road to Powlett road
Cornwall	Probus bypass
Cornwall	Carland cross—South of Trispen
Cumbria	Dalton-in-Furness to Askam-in-Furness
Derbyshire	Derby-London road diversion
Devon	Hatherleigh bypass
Devon	Salcombe dip to Inverteign drive Teignmouth
Durham	Witton Gilbert bypass
Durham	Wheatley Hill to Bowburn
East Sussex	New route—Ditton to Seaside—Eastbourne
Essex	Aukingford Gardens to Talbot roundabout, Chelmsford stages 1 and 2
Essex	Bypass—A12-A132
Gloucestershire	Tewkesbury eastern relief road
Gloucestershire	Gloucester southern radial relief road
Hampshire	Northam road Southampton
Hampshire	Woolmer road link
Hertfordshire	Cheshunt link road
Kent	Wainscott northern bypass
Kent	Hale street bypass
Kent	Gillingham northern link
Kent	Bearsted road/Sittingbourne road
Kent	Staplehurst road link
Lancashire	Blackburn eastern radial route
Lancashire	Westgate link Burnley
Lancashire	South Ribble M65 interface improvements
Leicestershire	Glen Parva bypass
Lincolnshire	A15/A1 Market Deeping bypass
Norfolk	Ormesby bypass
Norfolk	Brockdish/Needham bypass
Northamptonshire	Warmington improvements
Northamptonshire	Higham Ferrers bypass-Stanwick dualling
Northumberland	Kitty Brewster bridge duplication
Northumberland	Longhorsley bypass
Northumberland	Longframlington bypass
North Yorkshire	A661 Spofforth bypass
North Yorkshire	B1228 Peasholme Green bridge
Nottinghamshire	Awsworth and Cossall bypass
Nottinghamshire	Mansfield eastern outer ring road—phase 2
Oxfordshire	Oxford integrated transport package
Shropshire	Hodnet bypass
Somerset	Wells relief road
Somerset	Yeovil relief road
Staffordshire	Biddulph bypass
Staffordshire	Victoria place link Stoke-on-Trent

Authority	Scheme name
Staffordshire	Uttoxeter bypass phases 1 and 2
Suffolk	Kesgrave bypass
Suffolk	Rickinghall-Botesdale bypass
Surrey	Hazel avenue to Borough boundary, Guildford
Surrey	West End Bisley and Knaphill bypass
Surrey	Farnham bypass improvement
Warwickshire	Leamington-Kenilworth improvement
West Sussex	Rustington-Hangleton dualling—phase 2
West Sussex	Crawley transport package
Wiltshire	East Knoyle bypass

M5

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who has responsibility for the A369 at junction 19 of the M5 during and subsequent to the widening of the motorway.

Mr. Key: Avon county council is the highway authority for the A369 and the roundabout at M5 junction 19. The Secretary of State for Transport is the highway authority for the slip roads which are part of the M5 motorway.

Phase 1 of the motorway widening works, provision of four lanes between junctions 18 and 19, will not change these responsibilities. In the longer term, highway authority boundaries may need to be reviewed if and when the junction configuration changes as part of the subsequent phases.

Pleasure Craft (Light Dues)

Mr. Barry Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the charging of light dues on pleasure craft.

Mr. Norris: We believe that users of services should pay towards their cost. We have over a long period sought to identify a means of charging light dues to pleasure craft which would be both fair and capable of generating a worthwhile income for the general lighthouse fund, without creating a disproportionate and expensive administrative system to collect the dues. Following a joint paper which the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland put to the European Commission, the Commission recognised in its communication "A Common Policy on Safe Seas", published in February of this year, that the different approaches applied by member states to the funding of marine navigational aids resulted in some ports operating at a competitive disadvantage. The Commission proposed that a system should be established on a Community-wide basis under which dues would be set, collected and then shared among the national authorities. The system would be based on the "User Pays" principle. The Commission is now carrying forward work on this subject.

The Government have therefore concluded, because of these developments at the Community level, that they should not pursue further the charging of light dues to pleasure craft solely within the United Kingdom. We will wish to keep the situation under review depending on the progress of discussions at Community level.

Channel Tunnel

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library copies of the technical and other background studies prepared by Union Railways on the proposed route of the channel tunnel rail link.

Mr. Freeman: Union Railways' report, which I received on 29 October, and supporting appendices documents will, subject to commercial confidentiality, be published when the Government's decisions are announced. These documents contain a substantial amount of detail, drawing on the technical and background studies undertaken by Union Railways. It is not intended that the very large volume of raw material generated during the preparation of Union Railways' report be published.

Drivers Test Centre, Wibsey

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proposals he has to close Wibsey drivers' test centre in Bradford, South; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The Driving Standards Agency, which is responsible for driving test matters, set out its intention in its 1993-94 business plan to continue a programme of reviewing and rationalising its test centre estate. There are no proposals, however, at this time to close the centre at Wibsey.

Rail Track Study

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what sums of money have been paid or are payable to Coopers and Lybrand for its study into a charging regime for the rail track; and to what time period of work such payment relates;

(2) what progress has been made by Coopers and Lybrand in its study into a charging regime for access to the rail track; and what proposals it has put forward.

Mr. Freeman: The Department has paid approximately £1·6 million for the studies carried out by Coopers and Lybrand on access charges, for work since December 1991. Sums for the most recent work have yet to be settled. Good progress has been made. Detailed proposals on charge structure and calculation methods of costs have been put forward and agreed.

Highways Agency

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what are the job specification and terms and conditions and salary details for the post of chief executive of the Highways Agency; and to what extent they have been varied in the advertisements for the post.

Mr. Key: I am placing in the Library copies of the two editions—dated September and October 1993—of the leaflet outlining the job description and terms and conditions of the post, which have been issued to those responding to the advertisements. The only significant variation is in the paragraphs relating to salary and performance pay.

British Rail (Cycle Carriage)

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will require British Rail to increase the capacity for the carriage of cycles on the newly introduced Waterloo to Salisbury and Exeter trains.

Mr. Freeman: Carrying bicycles by train is an operational matter for British Rail. I understand that its policy is to allow one bicycle in each three-coach unit. Trains operate with either three, six or nine coaches depending on passenger number. The new trains have been designed to provide the maximum number of seats for passengers and do not have room for more than one bicycle in each three-coach unit.

Private Capital

Ms. Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. MacGregor *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* I gave my approval on 29 October for London Regional Transport to start work on the Jubilee line extension, to which the private sector is making a contribution of £400 million. Following conclusion of a joint venture agreement between BAA and British Rail in August, work is also going ahead on the Heathrow express link.

Work is continuing on the privately financed second Severn bridge and draft orders were published in June for the privately financed Birmingham northern relief road.

In addition, the Government have announced that it is the intention that both the channel tunnel rail link and crossrail schemes should be taken forward as joint ventures with the private sector.

Roads and Railways

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is the estimated land take needed for *(a)* the roads programme and *(b)* the railway programme for 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Mr. Key: Meaningful estimates cannot be made. The land take needed for roads and railways depends on the progress and the design of individual schemes.

In particular, with the channel tunnel rail link, the land take needed will depend upon the outcome of the detailed consultation currently taking place, as well as the timing of legislation to authorise the new line.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Counterfeit Goods

Mr. Harris: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what proposals he has for dealing with counterfeit goods and pirate tapes.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 already contains far-reaching provisions for dealing with counterfeit goods and pirate tapes. The Government are currently considering whether any new provisions are needed to strengthen the anti-counterfeiting measures introduced by that Act.

The Government also support the proposals to extend Council regulation (EEC) 3842/86, which already provides effective controls at the external borders of the EC against counterfeit goods, to cover goods that infringe copyright.

Mr. Harris: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will give trading standards officers power to seize counterfeit cassettes and goods under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Mr. McLoughlin: Trading standards officers were empowered by section 300 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 to enforce the new offences relating to counterfeit goods, where this entails the fraudulent application or use of a trade mark. There are no plans to extend these powers to tapes which infringe copyright but do not use a counterfeit trade mark.

US-Germany Telecommunications Treaty

Mr. Roger Evans: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 28 June, *Official Report*, column *371*, whether Her Majesty's Government or the European Commission is now to take legal action against Germany for refusing to apply either article 29 of the utilities directive or the recent Council regulation implementing retaliatory sanctions against the United States of America in the field of Government procurement, in signing its recent treaty on telecommunications with the United States of America.

Mr. Needham: I am not aware of the signing of any treaty of telecommunications between Germany and the United States of America. Government procurement is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Merseyside

Mr. Alton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if it is his policy to match the £600 million funding from the EC to Merseyside so that the area may benefit from opportunities available under its status as an objective 1 area.

Mr. Sainsbury: The European Community funds make grants towards the cost of a variety of projects undertaken by various beneficiaries. That part of the cost of each project which is not met by the funds remains the responsibility of the beneficiary.

This is the case not only on Merseyside, but generally, and will continue to be so.

IMS Ltd.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assets and liabilities were attached to the Export Credits Guarantee Department when IMS Ltd. was wound up.

Mr. Needham: IMS Ltd. has not been wound up and none of the company's assets and liabilities have been attached to the Export Credits Guarantee Department.

Launch Aid

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will publish the income and expenditure accounts of the launch aid programme in the last five years itemising the projects which have generated such moneys.

Mr. Sainsbury: The information is as follows:

	Outturn				
	1988-89	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Launch aid payments (£ million)					
Airframes					
A330/340	88·5	122·5	134·0	73·5	28·6
Helicopters					
EH101	9·9	11·1	7·1	5·2	2·8
TOTAL	98·4	133·6	141·1	78·7	31·4
Launch aid receipts (£ million)					
Airframes					
A320	—	10·0	34·0	55·4	40·9
Other[1]	1·1	0·6	0·5	0·3	0·2
Aero-engines					
RB211	20·6	29·9	14·3	25·6	27·9
V2500	—	—	1·6	0·1	2·8
Other[2]	0·9	2·0	1·4	1·6	2·9
TOTAL	22·6	42·5	51·8	83·0	74·7

[1] BAC 1-11, DH Comet, HS Trident.
[2] Dart, Spey, Proteus, Avon, Tay, Tyne.

Atomic Energy Authority Police

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many uniformed staff are in the Atomic Energy Authority police force; what powers these police have of arrest and to carry arms; and whether he intends to privatise this police force along with the rest of the Atomic Energy Authority.

Mr. Eggar: The current strength of the Atomic Energy Authority constabulary (AEAC) is 499. Officers of the AEAC are appointed as special constables and have powers of arrest in premises in the possession of or under the control of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority and British Nuclear Fuels plc, and, in respect of their property, within a radius of 15 miles of these premises. The powers of the AEAC were extended by the Atomic Energy Authority (Special Constables) Act 1976. This Act gives authority for officers to be armed both in the general course of their duties and in relation to safeguarding of special nuclear material in storage and transit throughout Great Britain.

The Act also authorises officers to exercise their powers in any place where it appears to them to be expedient to go in order to safeguard nuclear material or to pursue persons they believe to have removed or to have attempted to remove it unlawfully.

No decisions have yet been taken on whether to privatise the AEA or any part of it. I am considering the results of the consultancy study I announced on 1 April, *Official Report*, column *407*, as well as the AEA's own views, and an announcement will be made in due course. The future of the AEAC will be considered in the context of decisions about the future of the AEA as a whole.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Immigration

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* Ghanaian, *(b)* Nigerian, *(c)* Bangladeshi and *(d)* Indian citizens, admitted with visas as working holidaymakers, have been refused re-entry to Britain after a trip abroad during the period for which their visa has remained valid, between 1 January 1992 and 30 June 1993.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not available.

Suicide

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many verdicts of suicide were recorded for men aged 25 to 55 years for each year since 1987.

Mr. Maclean: Information on deaths recorded as suicide on death certificates for males aged 25 to 54 in England and Wales is given in the table.

Registered deaths of males aged 25-54 years where the cause of death is recorded on death certificate as suicide or self-inflicted injury, England and Wales 1987-92

Year	*Number of persons*
1987	1,449
1988	1,616
1989	1,521
1990	1,700
1991	1,851
1992	1,837

Source: Office of Population Censuses and Surveys.

Prisoners (Assaults)

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners from local and remand prisons in England and Wales have been treated at outside hospitals as a result of attacks on them in prison; and how many prisoners have been treated by medical services within prisons as a result of attacks in 1992.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from A. J. Butler to Mr. Peter Luff, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me, in the absence of the Director General from the office, to reply to your Question asking how many prisoners in local prisons and remand centres received medical treatment as a result of attacks on them in 1992.

I regret that this information is not statistically recorded.

Crime, Leicester

Mr. Janner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases of *(a)* burglary, *(b)* house breaking and *(c)* violent assault were reported for the city of Leicester in each of the last 15 years.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is not collected centrally. However, statistics by police force area can be found in the annual publication "Criminal statistics, England and Wales", copies of which are available in the Library.

Vandalism

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what has been the reported number of cases of vandalism in each of the police divisions covering the Greater London area in each of the last three years.

Mr. Maclean: The available information to recorded offences of criminal damage in police divisions in the Metropolitan police district been provided by the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis. The information is contained in the following table:

Recorded criminal damage offences in the Metropolitan Police District
Metropolitan Police District

Police district	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
No. 1 Area			
Barkingside	2,296	2,597	2,851
Chingford	1,744	2,081	2,101
Ilford	2,211	2,207	2,163
Leyton	1,952	2,307	2,456
Islington	2,677	2,438	2,725
Holloway	2,317	2,518	2,584
Edmonton	1,996	2,533	2,637
Ponders End	2,861	3,206	3,032
Hornsey	2,148	2,124	2,203
Tottenham	1,860	2,285	2,571
No. 2 Area			
Hackney	2,396	2,802	2,821
Stoke Newington	2,172	2,731	2,778
Bethnal Green	1,174	1,313	1,343
Leman Street	1,029	1,404	1,265
Limehouse	2,082	2,168	1,498
Havering	2,924	2,390	3,597
Dagenham	3,001	3,425	3,293
Plaistow	2,436	2,968	2,844
Forest Gate	2,841	2,650	2,648
Thames River	35	31	20
No. 3 Area			
Southwark	2,249	2,485	2,929
Peckham	2,143	2,456	2,689
Carter Street	1,997	2,015	2,119
Catford	1,933	2,078	2,448
Lewisham	2,233	2,091	2,614
Orpington	2,049	2,535	2,982
Bromley	1,863	2,305	2,932
Greenwich	2,400	2,985	3,662
Plumstead	3,302	3,862	4,344
Bexley Heath	3,055	3,804	4,476
No. 4 Area			
Brixton	2,436	2,501	2,315
Kennington	863	1,002	1,141
Clapham	1,733	1,721	2,040
Streatham	2,472	2,489	2,300
Merton	3,697	4,060	3,850
Croydon	2,513	2,651	3,108
South Norwood	3,127	3,017	3,439
Epsom & Sutton	3,697	4,505	4,639
No. 5 Area			
Chiswick	1,255	1,531	1,989
Hounslow	2,562	3,266	3,242
Spelthorne	1,187	1,601	1,779
Richmond upon Thames	2,269	2,620	2,726
Kingston	2,850	3,104	3,479
Battersea	1,925	1,976	2,009
Tooting	1,915	2,158	2,375
Wandsworth	2,059	2,136	2,176
No. 6 Area			
Chelsea	935	1,470	934
Kensington	1,172	986	1,085
Notting Hill	1,518	1,787	2,354
Hammersmith	2,462	2,572	2,727
Fulham	1,334	1,389	2,018
Heathrow	300	297	288
Ealing	2,962	3,424	3,739
Southall	2,717	2,952	3,382
Hillingdon	4,100	4,638	5,059
No. 7 Area			
Hampstead	1,818	2,024	2,088
Kentish Town	2,266	2,163	2,396
Holborn	1,123	1,146	1,247
Harrow	2,640	3,632	3,543
Wembley	2,020	2,307	2,276
Kilburn	2,612	2,894	3,161
Barnet and Hertsmere	2,175	2,555	2,689
Golders Green	1,578	1,891	1,970
West Hendon	2,005	2,119	2,429
No. 8 Area			
Belgravia	940	984	987
West End Central	796	789	712
Charing Cross	1,147	595	580
Paddington Green	1,451	1,378	1,098
Marylebone	811	776	552
Harrow Road	1,370	1,497	1,653

Prisoners (Home Leave)

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consultations there are with the police and victims regarding home leave for prisoners serving custodial sentences for serious assaults.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Mrs. Ann Coffey, dated October 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about consultations with police and victims regarding home leave for prisoners serving sentences for serious assaults.

Guidance on home leave is contained in Prison Service Circular Instruction 43/1992, a copy of which is in the House of Commons Library. When deciding whether to grant leave prison governors should take account of the attitude of known victims in the local community, and they may also seek reports from the local police. If the police or any victims of crime are concerned about the possibility of a particular prisoner being allowed home leave, it is open to them to submit their observations to the governor, so that they can be included in his/her deliberations.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

Malaysia

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the decision to grant support for the Pergau hydro-electric project in Malaysia was linked to any other bilateral trade agreement with Malaysia.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: No.

Angola

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much aid was given by Her Majesty's Government to Angola in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: United Kingdom gross bilateral aid to Angola in 1992-93, for which provisional figures are available, was £1·824 million.

Somalia

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the amount of aid given by the United Kingdom to Somalia during the past 12 months.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Since January 1993, Britain has committed nearly £11·5 million in humanitarian and development assistance to Somalia, including our contribution to EC programmes.

SCOTLAND

Connor Peripherals (UK) Ltd.

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what action the Scottish Office will be taking to ensure that grant assistance paid to Connor Peripherals (UK) Ltd. to set up its Irvine plant is recouped by the Exchequer.

Mr. Stewart: This has been covered in discussions with the company. The details are commercially confidential.

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much Connor Peripherals (UK) Ltd. has received in grant assistance from the Government since coming to Irvine.

Mr. Stewart: Details of grant payments made to individual companies are commercially confidential and are not divulged.

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations were made by the Scottish Office to Connor Peripherals (UK) Ltd. prior to the company's announcement of job losses at their plant in Irvine.

Mr. Stewart: My officials in Locate in Scotland were in direct contact with senior executives of Connor Peripherals both here in the United Kingdom and in the United States in the months preceding the company's announcement. Moreover, I met Connor's senior management at their Californian headquarters during my recent visit to the United States.

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement concerning the recent announcement of redundancies by Connor Peripherals (UK) Ltd. in Irvine.

Mr. Stewart: I am disappointed by the redundancies recently announced by Connor Peripherals but encouraged that the company is to retain its European repair and distribution facility at Irvine. This facility remains an important part of the infrastructural support for Scotland's personal computer industry. The redundancies derive from overcapacity and price competition affecting disc-drive manufacturers on a worldwide basis. It is important to note however that Conner's manufacturing operations in Irvine have been suspended pending improvements in world market conditions, and at this stage it is not possible to predict if these job losses will be permanent.

Job Losses

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what additional assistance he will be offering to agencies in Ayrshire following the loss of jobs at Jetstream Aircraft Ltd., Wilson's Pipe Fittings and Connor Peripherals (UK) Ltd.; and if he will make it his policy not to wind up the Irvine development corporation before 1999.

Mr. Stewart: My right hon. Friend and I regret the recent announcements of job losses by companies in Ayrshire. The local enterprise company, Enterprise Ayrshire, has at its disposal a wide range of measures and flexibility to encourage broad economic development throughout Ayrshire; and to provide training, reskilling and to generate alternative employment opportunities. The overall allocation of resources to local enterprise companies is a matter for Scottish Enterprise to determine, with Enterprise Ayrshire currently allocated a budget of more than £24 million. While it is for the local enterprise company to set its own priorities within those resources, we place significant importance on its ability to react promptly and flexibly in addressing the consequences of closures and job losses. Enterprise Ayrshire has been closely involved with Jetstream on a number of fronts and will continue to maintain its contact. Any difficulties which might arise from the commercial decisions of it or other companies to cease or reduce operations will be fully considered by Scottish Enterprise in its future allocation decisions.

My right hon. Friend set out the Government's policy on the wind-up of the Scottish new town development corporations in the reply given to the hon. Member for Cumbernauld and Kilsyth (Mr. Hogg) on 27 October, *Official Report*, columns *682-84*. This policy reflects the belief that Scottish Enterprise and the local enterprise companies are sufficiently matured to undertake the leading economic development role for all areas within their boundaries.

Regional Selective Assistance

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many companies in Scotland currently receive regional selective assistance from the Government; and how much regional selective assistance has been paid by the Government to companies in Scotland in each of the last five years.

Mr. Stewart: At 31 October 1993 there were 744 projects in Scotland which had received at least one instalment of regional selective assistance (RSA) and were either not yet complete or were still being monitored following completion. The expenditure figures requested are given in the table.

Gross expenditure in Scotland on RSA grant

	£ million
1988-89	38·0
1989-90	40·6
1990-91	68·2
1991-92	63·7
1992-93	59·2

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether the Scottish Office is reviewing the current rules governing regional selective assistance; and how much money the Scottish Office has managed to recoup from companies in receipt of regional selective assistance when the conditions of the award are not met.

Mr. Stewart: The regional selective assistance scheme is kept under continuous review. In the five years to 31 October 1993 £3·685 million of regional selective assistance was recovered from companies in connection with projects in respect of which the terms of the offer were not subsequently met.

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many companies in Scotland in receipt of regional selective assistance have subsequently announced job losses or the closure of their plants.

Mr. Stewart: Information in the form requested is not available.

Amkor Anam Europe Ltd.

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland further to his answer of 3 March, *Official Report*, column *178*, how much money the Scottish Office has recovered in grant assistance from Amkor Anam Europe Ltd. following the closure of its Irvine plant in November 1992.

Mr. Stewart: Details of grant recoveries from individual companies are commercially confidential and are not divulged.

Sporting Rights

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will consider exempting sporting rights from rating liability.

Mr. Lang: It has long been recognised that a far greater range of subjects consisting of sporting rights are liable for non-domestic rates in Scotland than in England or Wales. I propose to rectify this anomaly by introducing a provision in the forthcoming Local Government Reform Bill to exclude sporting rights in Scotland from a liability for non-domestic rates with effect from 1995, when other subjects will be revalued.

The Government have been concerned for many years to remove the anomalies whereby properties in Scotland may attract rates bills that are not attracted by similar properties in England and Wales. Many such anomalies have now been dealt with successfully and we are hopeful that the remaining ones will be ironed out at the 1995 revaluation. One of the most prominent remaining areas of concern is that of sporting rights—shootings and fishings—and I am glad to announce that this problem can now be resolved. I know that many sporting proprietors consider their rates burden oppressive and the disparity with the situation in England and Wales unfair. I hope that my proposal to exclude sporting rights in Scotland from a liability for non-domestic rates will rectify this situation.

Caledonian MacBrayne

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to introduce new financial arrangements for Caledonian MacBrayne.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: Capital expenditure on vessels by Caledonian MacBrayne will from now on be financed by grants of 75 per cent. from the Scottish Office with the balance being met by long-term borrowing, also from the Scottish Office. This arrangement replaces the previous arrangement under which capital expenditure on vessels was financed mainly through borrowing from the Ship Mortgage Finance Company, and is being applied to the financing of the new vessel for the Ullapool-Stornoway service. The purpose of the new arrangements is to eliminate the need for any capital expenditure to be financed by short term borrowing. Additional grant of £6·7 million is also being made this year to eliminate the company's accumulated overdraft and to enable the company's accounting year to be changed from a calendar year to a financial year basis. Capital grant for the Ullapool-Stornoway vessel will total £10·9 million, of which £3·45 million will be paid in 1993-94. All the changes will be accommodated by compensating reductions in the company's market borrowings and will therefore be contained within the existing external financing limit set for the company.

Labour Statistics

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) how many people resident in the Edinburgh travel-to-work area are employed in the Haddington travel-to-work area;

(2) how many people resident *(a)* in the Haddington travel-to-work area are employed in Berwickshire, *(b)* in Berwickshire are employed in the Haddington travel-to-work area, *(c)* in the Haddington travel-to-work area are employed in the Borders region and *(d)* in the Borders region are employed in the Haddington travel-to-work area;

(3) how many people resident in *(a)* the Haddington travel-to-work area, and *(b)* Berwickshire, are engaged in full-time work in (i) agriculture and (ii) fishing; and what proportions of the total work force those figures represent;

(4) how many people resident in the Haddington travel-to-work area are employed in the Edinburgh travel-to-work area.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* Information at the level of detail requested can be provided only by using a specialised product from the 1991 census of population described as the special workplace statistics. This product is scheduled for release around the end of

November. Analysis by travel-to-work data will require the use of an appropriate software package, the results of which are not expected before spring 1994.

Prisons

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list for each of Her Majesty's prison establishments in Scotland the key objectives reported by the Prison Service for the year 1993-94; and what they were for the year 1992-93.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* I have asked Mr. E. W. Frizzell, the chief executive of the Scottish Prison Service, to arrange for a reply to be given to the hon. Member.

Letter from E. W. Frizzell to Mr. Martin Redmond, dated 2 November 1993:

The Secretary of State for Scotland has asked me to reply to your recent question asking for a list of the key objectives reported by the Scottish Prison Service for the year 1993-94; and what they were for the year 1992-93 for each of Her Majesty's prison establishments in Scotland.

The key objectives for each establishment for 1993-94 are listed as an annex to our Corporate Plan; I have attached a copy. The key objectives for 1992-93 are listed in the Scottish Prison Service Annual Report for 1992-93 (Cm 2323), a copy of which I have also attached.

A copy of this letter will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library, together with the attachments.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people resident in *(a)* Musselburgh, Prestonpans and Wallyford and *(b)* the rest of East Lothian are employed in (i) deep mining and (ii) opencast mining; and what proportion of the total work force those figures represent.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* Information at the level of detail requested is not available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Health Care (Smokers)

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he introduced guidelines to ensure equality of access to health care for smokers and non-smokers; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* No such guidelines have been issued.

The decision to offer any particular treatment to an individual is a matter for clinical judgment, taking into account a number of factors including the extent to which the patient is likely to benefit. The professional issues which may arise were discussed by the Chief Medical Officer in the September 1993 edition of *Health Bulletin*, Vol. 51, pages 269-70.

Victim Support

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish the funding allocated to Victim Support Scotland in each of the past 10 years expressed in current prices.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The Scottish Office funding to the Scottish Association of Victim Support Schemes since its formation in 1985 has been as follows:

Financial year	*£*
1984-85	600
1985-86	14,000
1986-87	43,610
1987-88	62,090
1988-89	155,000
1989-90	286,000
1990-91	349,000
1991-92	442,000
1992-93	642,000
1993-94	764,000

These figures are the actual grant figures paid in the relevant years.

Crime Victims

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has held with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities relating to the placing of a statutory obligation on local authorities to provide services for victims of crime in their areas; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The Scottish Office have not held any discussions with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities relating to the placing of a statutory obligation on local authorities to provide services for victims of crime in their areas.

Local authorities already have a victim support role as part of their general duty to support those in need and this is augmented by specialist assistance from social work departments if required. The Scottish Association of Victim Support Schemes (SAVSS) provides short-term support to victims of crime. The volunteer commitment is the essential component of this important service in the Government's view, and does not lend itself to a statutory approach.

Over the period 1 July 1992 to 30 June 1993, 38,447 victims were offered help by 62 local schemes.

Trust Assessments

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what has been the cost of employing mangement consultants to assist in his Department's assessment of applications for trust status in each wave; how many assessments took place; and which were the consultants concerned.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The cost of employing management consultants to assist in the assessment of applications for trust status was £97,760. There have been two assessments; the consultants involved were KPMG for second wave trust applications and Coopers and Lybrand for third wave applications.

Private Investment Projects

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* Privately financed projects in the health service which have begun since last year's autumn statement are listed below.

	Project
Dundee Teaching Hospitals Trust	Lease of laboratory analyser equipment
Grampian Healthcare Trust	Provision by Westminster Healthline of beds for the mentally ill
Lanarkshire Health Board	Contract with TAKARE PLC for the provision of 90 care beds for the elderly with dementia
Greater Glasgow Health Board	60 beds for long-term care of the elderly; 60 beds for long-term mentally infirm at Darnley
Greater Glasgow Health Board	120 beds for long-term care of elderly at Ruchill
Greater Glasgow Health Board	120 beds for long-term care of the elderly at Shettleston
Lothian Health Board	Molecular medicine centre, Western general hospital

A number of large infrastructure projects are also being considered as potential candidates for private finance, including water and sewerage projects. For transport, building on the success already achieved in attracting private finance to the Skye bridge project, feasibility studies are already under way into the opportunities which may exist for attracting private sector investment to further transport infrastructure projects in Scotland, including the second Forth Road bridge and the associated road links and the fastlink project which could link the M74 and M8 motorways. In addition, many of the projects undertaken by bodies such as Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Home and the new towns attract private capital.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests, of (i) Highlands and Islands Enterprise, (ii) Scottish Enterprise, (iii) local enterprise companies, (iv) Scottish Homes and (v) new town development corporations.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The information requested is set out in the table:

	Highlands and Islands Enterprise	*Scottish Enterprise*	*Local enterprise companies*	*Scottish Homes*	*New town development corporations*
(a) statutory right to attend all board or committee meetings	No	No	No	No	No
(b) statutory right to inspect the minutes of meetings	No	No	No	No	No
(c) statutory right to inspect the annual reports	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
(d) statutory right to inspect the annual accounts	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
(e) statutory right to inspect a register of members' interests	No	No	No	No	No

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing the total gross public spending for each year since 1991-92 and the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for *(a)* Highlands and Islands Enterprises, *(b)* Scottish Enterprise and *(c)* local enterprise companies.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The information for Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise is set out in the table. Expenditure by the local enterprise companies is an operational matter for Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. I have asked the chairmen of these bodies to write to the hon. Member.

£ million

	Total expenditure at 1992-93 prices	
	Scottish Enterprise	*Highlands and Islands Enterprise*
1991-92	462·0	74·6
1992-93	448·8	74·6
1993-94 estimated	439·2	77·0
1994-95 plans[1]	411·8	74·0
1995-96 plans[1]	410·0	72·4

[1]Subject to revision in the public expenditure survey.

Housing

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what are the figures for gross public investment in Scotland in the provision of housing, both new build and renovated, by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations for each year since 1979-80 with the projected investment for both categories up to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices; and if he will publish this information in the form of a table.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The information is in the tables. Table 1 provides details of the total gross expenditure on housing by local authorities and housing associations in each year since 1979, expressed in 1992-93 prices, using gross domestic product deflators. Table 2 provides details in cash terms of the resource planning assumptions issued to local authorities as a guide for investment planning up to 1995-96. There are no comparable assumptions for housing association investment.

Table 1

	Local authorities £ million	*Housing Associations £ million*
1979-80	538·451	116·146
1980-81	477·082	132·824
1981-82	469·353	156·690
1982-83	443·245	186·648
1983-84	502·831	179·313

	Local authorities £ million	Housing Associations £ million
1984-85	403·206	155·925
1985-86	435·898	154·623
1986-87	497·226	163·701
1987-88	624·071	180·119
1988-89	571·722	208·505
1989-90	579·965	241·573
1990-91	544·214	215·087
1991-92	490·434	228·156
1992-93	457·736	255·121
1993-94	[1]436·228	[1]254·521

[1]Provisional.

Table 2
Resource Planning Assumptions (1992-93 prices)

	£ million
1994-95	400
1995-96	405

Higher Education

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* A table showing the requested information is contained in "Serving Scotland's Needs" (Cm 2214). Table 6·2 shows that provision of £416 million —£405 million at 1992-93 prices—has been made for the council's expenditure in 1993-94. For planning purposes only, sums of £434 million—£405 million—and £440 million—£396 million—have been indicated for 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Scottish Homes

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing the total gross public spending for each year since 1990-91 and the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices, for Scottish Homes.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* Scottish Homes total programme expenditure during the period 1990-91 to 1993-94 is shown in the table. Projected expenditure for 1994-95 and beyond is currently being considered as part of the public expenditure survey.

Scottish Homes Programme expenditure expressed in 1992-93 prices using GDP deflators

	£ million
[1]1990-91	304
[1]1991-92	327
[1]1992-93	364
[2]1993-94	362

[1] (outturn).
[2] (plan).

Learning Disabilities

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people with learning disabilities are presently living in long-stay hospitals in each health board area.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* The information in the table records the position as at 31 December 1992.

Health Board of origin	Number of Residents
Argyll and Clyde	335
Ayrshire and Arran	208
Borders	28
Dumfries and Galloway	99
Fife	223
Forth Valley	189
Grampian	359
Greater Glasgow	886
Highland	110
Lanarkshire	365
Lothian	434
Orkney	5
Shetland	6
Tayside	211
Western Isles	8
SCOTLAND	3,466

NHS Trusts

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is his estimate of the current financial year's income from private patients at each trust hospital; and what proportion in each case it forms of the hospital total income.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* This information is not collected centrally.

WALES

Home Renovation Grants

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what changes he proposed to make to the house renovation grant system following his recent consultation exercise.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: After considering the responses to the consultation paper on the future of private housing renewal programmes, I have today laid the House Renovation Grant Limit Order, under which the upper limit for mandatory grants to owners, tenants and landlords in Wales will be £24,000. The order will come into force on 14 January 1994. I propose no change for the moment, to the exchequer subsidy rate or to the applicants test of resources.

The consultation paper included longer-term options which I am considering further. The Government's objective is to ensure that the resources available for private sector housing are targeted effectively.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food when she hopes to reply to the report sent to her Department in June by microbiologist Dr. Stephen Dealler of York district hospital in respect of BSE in cattle; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Soames: At a meeting on 22 June Dr. Stephen Dealler gave a pre-publication copy of an article to MAFF

scientists, but requested that it be held in confidence and provided to no one else. On 18 August 1993 Dr. Dealler wrote to the secretary of the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC) giving his permission for the article to be circulated to the committee, and asking for it to be considered at its meeting in October. It was considered at the meeting on 7 October and the chairman of the committee, Dr. Tyrrell, FRS, wrote to Dr. Dealler on 27 October with the committee's comments on the article. That letter drew attention to the fact that Dr. Dealler had drawn his conclusions on the basis of assumptions made about the BSE infectivity of various tissues by extrapolation from the disease scrapie in sheep. Using these assumptions he had gone on to calculate the potential numbers of people who had been exposed to various levels of BSE agent.

The letter from Dr. Tyrrell informed Dr. Dealler that recent experiments conducted with tissues from BSE-infected cattle have shown that only the brain and spinal cord have a detectable level of infectivity and the range of other tissues considered by Dr. Dealler, including meat, liver, kidney and lung do not have any detectable infectivity. The implication of using these acutal results, rather than extrapolating from sheep disease, is that there is no evidence of any significant risk from the consumption of tissues other than brain and spinal cord from adult cattle. Brain and spinal cord are among the specified bovine offals whose use is banned under the BSE Order 1991 and which do not therefore enter the human or animal food chain. The SEAC has not advised the Government to amend their safeguards as a result of its consideration of Dr. Dealler's article.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list for each month for the last 12 months, and by region, the number of cases of BSE in cattle that have been reported.

Mr. Soames: The numbers of suspect cases of BSE notified to the Ministry in Great Britain, and placed under restrictions, by county for each month from October 1992 to September 1993 are as follows:

Number of suspect cases of BSE reported by county

	1992			1993								
	October	*November*	*December*	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*
Eastern	257	233	248	265	213	271	226	162	196	214	216	255
Bedfordshire	12	11	10	12	7	9	9	9	8	3	8	5
Cambridgeshire	10	9	19	14	15	12	18	8	5	14	10	10
Essex	31	13	25	21	13	23	24	12	18	22	17	16
Hertfordshire	17	9	19	16	8	20	14	10	11	9	18	16
Lincolnshire	19	26	16	19	22	33	19	15	14	26	28	34
Norfolk	104	83	94	102	84	99	76	63	78	92	71	110
Northamptonshire	32	35	30	31	26	23	30	19	23	19	27	22
Suffolk	32	47	35	50	38	52	36	26	39	29	37	42
Mid and West	931	859	799	872	830	936	798	780	753	777	759	810
Cheshire	165	152	156	164	150	182	132	135	137	142	132	136
Derbyshire	100	96	89	105	101	94	83	84	73	95	90	90
Hereford and Worcester	77	65	55	59	53	77	66	50	56	54	65	47
Lancashire	186	166	152	153	157	175	134	135	121	127	120	141
Leicestershire	74	63	59	53	88	69	63	63	64	55	69	65
Manchester	12	9	6	10	16	12	18	10	9	9	6	12
Merseyside	5	2	2	1	6	5	1	4	1	3	12	10
Nottinghamshire	24	19	24	26	22	33	20	23	22	19	8	16
Salop	114	96	86	130	100	113	95	90	90	73	65	110
Staffordshire	137	146	135	116	100	122	149	158	145	169	151	131
West Midlands	3	0	2	5	3	5	3	2	2	2	3	5
Warwickshire	34	45	33	50	34	49	34	26	33	29	38	47
Northern	464	462	441	471	452	528	417	365	365	390	422	443
Cleveland	5	4	7	8	9	8	2	6	3	8	8	7
Cumbria	140	157	153	133	150	143	124	93	94	114	113	108
Durham	17	19	23	17	18	23	19	12	12	9	21	26
Humberside	20	24	21	24	18	31	21	22	20	16	26	16
Northumberland	45	29	31	31	38	32	23	24	22	28	22	30
Tyne and Wear	0	1	5	2	1	2	3	1	2	0	1	1
Yorkshire, North	197	192	159	207	180	240	202	177	173	183	191	210
Yorkshire, South	12	13	14	20	18	17	8	5	19	12	13	10
Yorkshire, West	28	23	28	29	20	32	15	25	20	20	29	35
South	391	366	339	386	360	424	366	304	242	290	280	366
Berkshire	13	20	16	13	10	22	16	10	6	19	11	21
Buckinghamshire	28	27	36	40	27	45	33	38	26	25	31	27
Hampshire	78	66	48	97	72	88	71	71	47	54	49	81
Isle of Wight	13	15	17	21	16	15	9	16	10	6	16	11
Kent	47	34	48	32	48	49	51	29	30	35	30	44
London	2	1	0	7	2	2	4	6	1	3	1	3
Oxon	68	51	45	44	53	50	43	40	38	39	31	46
Surrey	27	32	25	32	27	29	31	15	18	19	20	26
Sussex, East	43	30	38	39	39	45	38	28	15	27	32	41
Sussex, West	72	80	66	61	66	79	70	51	51	63	59	66
South West	1,452	1,315	1,476	1,461	1,441	1,497	1,218	1,063	1,037	1,142	1,056	1,162
Avon	80	80	100	91	77	78	67	57	48	58	59	63

	1992			1993							
	October	*November*	*December*	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*
Cornwall	285	270	283	261	283	327	225	212	193	237	177	211
Devon	321	315	330	367	352	356	265	251	290	287	264	263
Dorset	217	181	221	204	173	199	172	153	150	142	162	144
Gloucester	80	69	80	74	79	82	64	55	50	52	57	58
Somerset	303	233	278	304	299	288	260	230	197	246	226	300
Wiltshire	166	167	184	160	178	167	165	105	109	120	111	123
Wales	452	437	426	493	391	456	393	354	329	365	345	376
Clwyd	73	72	57	80	55	75	53	60	45	66	56	60
Dyfed	210	204	199	253	190	215	194	163	172	179	165	172
Glamorgan	6	9	5	6	7	6	1	7	4	4	3	7
Glamorgan, South	12	5	19	15	14	14	16	11	7	8	14	9
Glamorgan	3	6	3	2	3	5	5	2	1	2	5	5
Gwent	31	37	36	37	33	31	29	25	17	34	20	28
Gwynedd	32	23	23	24	18	22	16	12	10	11	17	27
Powys	85	81	84	76	71	88	79	74	73	61	65	68
Scotland	260	252	233	222	246	274	221	188	185	200	219	206
Borders	11	20	16	20	16	21	20	10	8	12	14	13
Central	6	5	4	8	9	7	5	6	11	9	7	1
Dumfries	84	80	72	76	64	82	68	64	57	57	54	60
Fife	7	13	13	9	8	13	9	5	7	11	12	6
Grampian	47	38	40	37	35	50	35	33	42	27	39	49
Highland	13	7	10	12	13	10	8	10	8	13	9	8
Lothian	10	4	4	10	8	10	4	8	2	4	6	8
Orkney	4	1	4	7	2	7	3	0	4	3	5	3
Strathclyde	60	59	54	37	69	55	55	40	29	51	54	43
Tayside	18	25	16	6	22	18	14	12	17	13	19	15
Western	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Final figures for October 1993 are not yet available.

Overall, about 85 per cent. of these suspect cases are eventually confirmed as BSE, the proportion varying at different times of the year.

Forestry Commission

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer of 26 October, *Official Report*, column *560*, what is the Ordnance Survey grid reference of each Forestry Commission property in Yorkshire and Humberside sold since 27 July 1981; and if she will place a map in the Library which names and identifies each of these properties.

Mr. Jack: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list for each separate piece of land currently held by the Forestry Commission in Yorkshire and Humberside *(a)* its name, *(b)* its area in hectares, *(c)* its Ordnance Survey grid reference and *(d)* whether there is public access to the land; and if she will place a map in the Library which names and identifies each of these pieces of land.

Mr. Jack: The Forestry Commission manages the following areas of woodland in Yorkshire and Humberside:

County	*Area (hectares)*
Yorkshire	24,096
Humberside	360

I have made arrangements for a map showing the location of the individual woodlands to be placed in the Library as soon as possible.

The more detailed information requested on the individual woodlands is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list for each separate piece of land acquired by the Forestry Commission in Yorkshire and Humberside since 27 July *(a)* its name, *(b)* its area in hectares, *(c)* its Ordnance Survey grid reference, *(d)* the purchase price and *(e)* the name and address of the previous owner.

Mr. Jack: The Forestry Commission has acquired only one piece of land in Yorkshire and Humberside since 27 July 1981. This was part of the Troutsdale estate in north Yorkshire which was purchased in 1987 for £24,000. It covers 37 hectares and its Ordnance Survey grid reference is SE930890. The names and addresses of previous owners of land acquired by the commission are treated as confidential.

Badger Culling

Mr. Morley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food when the Government intends to make an announcement on their current review of badger culling.

Mr. Soames: We are reviewing the current badger control arrangements in the light of the development of a test for TB in live badgers. We will be discussing this with the consultative panel on badgers and bovine tuberculosis which will be meeting on 18 November. We will need to consider carefully the views of the panel before making an announcement.

Hens

Mr. Hoon: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what proposals he has to improve the welfare of laying hens.

Mr. Soames: We are awaiting Commission proposals to set revised welfare standards for laying hens kept in battery systems and new standards for hens kept in alternative systems. The Government wish to see the highest welfare standards set on a Community basis for laying hens in all systems of production.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer of 25 October, *Official Report*, column *510*, if she will place in the Library the final report of the London convention's intergovernmental panel of experts on radioactive waste disposal at sea.

Mr. Jack: A copy of the final report of the London convention's intergovernmental panel of experts on radioactive waste disposal at sea has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Office Costs

Mr. Byers: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what is the estimated amount to be spent in 1993-94 in rent and other costs associated with the offices of her Department in Whitehall place, London.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* The properties in Whitehall place occupied by the Ministry are Crown freeholds. However, under internal Government recharging arrangements, the Ministry pays rent for them to the Exchequer. The Ministry is also required to pay contributions in lieu of rates to the Valuation Office agency of the Inland Revenue. Additionally, responsibility for all maintenance and refurbishment of these buildings has been devolved to the Ministry. Estimated expenditure in 1993-94 is as follows.

	£
Running Costs	
Rent	4,322,199
Contributions in Lieu of Rates	1,166,020
Facilities Management including maintence and cleaning	612,000
Furnishings	230,000
Utilities	104,000
Capital Costs	
Refurbishment	1,072,000
TOTAL	7,506,219

Public Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is she will list those public investment projects within her Department's responsibility which have attracted private captial and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* There are no ongoing public investment projects within my Department which have attracted private capital since the 1992 autumn statement. However, my Ministry requires authorities responsible for flood defence and coast protection to obtain private sector contributions towards the cost of capital works needed to facilitate current or future developments, and encourages authorities to do so where defences provide a particular direct benefit to a business.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Child Benefit

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, South (Mr. Griffiths) of 21 June, *Official Report*, column 13, to include estimates for 1994-95 based on the assumption of statutory indexation and measures already announced in the 1993 Budget; and if he will include estimates for the effect on revenues if child benefit was taxed at the higher rate only.

Mr. Dorrell: Estimated revenue yields are given in the table. For 1994-95 the rates of child benefit have been assumed to be £10·20 per week for the first child and £8·25 per week for subsequent children in line with the 1·8 per cent. increase in the September retail prices index.

£ million

	Yield in a full year	
	At 1993-94 income levels	*At 1994-95 income levels*
Child benefit taxed as		
Father (or lone mother's) income	1,150	1,200
Mother (or lone father's) income	625	650
At higher rate only on father or lone mother's income	200	250
At higher rate only on mother or lone father's income	30	30

Income Tax

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the tax liabilities of taxpayers in 1994-95 in the income ranges *(a)* including and *(b)* excluding the effects of changes in national insurance contributions (i) under £5,000, (ii) £5,000 to £10,000, (iii) £10,000 to £15,000, (iv) £15,000 to £20,000, (v) £20,000 to £25,000, (vi) £25,000 to £30,000, (vii) £30,000 to £40,000, (viii) £40,000 to £50,000, (ix) £50,000 to £70,000, (x) over £70,000 and (xi) over £100,000, compared with what their liability would be under the indexed 1993-94 tax regime, assuming statutory indexation in 1994-95 and including measures already announced in the 1993 Budget.

Mr. Dorrell: Latest estimates of the average changes in income tax and national insurance contribution liabilities in 1994-95, assuming statutory indexation and inclusion of measures already announced, compared with liabilities under a statutory indexed 1993-94 regime are shown:

Income Tax and National insurance contributions

Range of individual's income in 1994-95 £	*Numbers gaining* 000s	*Amount* £	*Numbers losing* 000s	*Amount* £
Under 5,000	—	—	1,600	10
5,000-10,000	1,200	18	5,700	50
10,000-15,000	480	20	5,600	130
15,000-20,000	170	20	3,800	210
20,000-25,000	80	20	2,000	260
25,000-30,000	40	20	1,200	310
30,000-40,000	40	20	1,100	480
40,000-50,000	10	20	400	500
50,000-70,000	10	20	260	510
70,000-80,000	—	—	60	510
over 80,000	10	20	180	500
Total	2,100	20	31,800	170

I regret that a reliable analysis of taxpayers with incomes over £100,000 is not available.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue which would have accrued to the Treasury in each year since 1988 had all the income tax rates over 40 per cent. been maintained.

Mr. Dorrell: I refer to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) on 29 October, *Official Report*, columns *849-50*.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue which would accrue to the Treasury next year if the higher rates of income tax, over 40 per cent. abolished in 1988, had been maintained.

Mr. Dorrell: The latest estimate of the full year revenue cost at 1994-95 income levels, assuming statutory indexation of allowances and thresholds and inclusion of measures already announced, compared with reintroduced tax rates of 45, 50, 55 and 60 per cent., is £5.2 billion. The band widths for the tax rate schedule have been calculated by uprating the corresponding parts of the 1987-88 regime by movements in the retail prices index as in the statutory indexation formula.

The estimate does not allow for any behavioural effect that might have resulted had the tax rates above 40 per cent. been retained, and does not include capital gains tax.

VAT

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what would be the impact on the retail prices index of *(a)* a 1 per cent. increase in the rate of VAT and *(b)* the extension of VAT at (i) 8 per cent. and (ii) 17·5 per cent. to items currently subject to a zero rate, giving figures separately for each item.

Sir John Cope: The RPI impact—excluding mortgage interest payments—of an increase of 1 per cent. in the standard rate of VAT is estimated to be 0·50 per cent. The table shows the impact on the RPI—excluding mortgage interest payments—of extending VAT to currently zero-rated items.

	8 per cent VAT	*17·5 per cent VAT*
Food	1·01	2·20
Construction of new dwellings	—	—
Domestic fuel and power	0·37	0·82
Domestic passenger transport	0·18	0·39
International passenger transport	0·08	0·18
Books, newspapers and magazines	0·13	0·27
Children's clothing	0·09	0·20
Water and sewerage services	0·09	0·20
Drugs and medicines on prescription	—	—
Supplies to charities	—	—
Ships and aircraft above a certain size	—	—
Vehicles and other supplies to disabled people	—	—

Mr. Betts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the relief and exemptions on VAT; and what will be the cost of each to the Exchequer *(a)* in 1993-94 and *(b)* in 1994-95 if unchanged.

Sir John Cope *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* Figures for 1993-94 are published in table 9 of the publication "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs" which is in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what would be the effect on Treasury revenue in 1994-95 and in a full year of extending VAT at *(a)* 8 per cent. and *(b)* 17·5 per cent. to all items currently zero rated, giving figures separately for each item.

Sir John Cope: Table 9 of the publication "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs"—which is in the House of Commons Library—shows the estimated costs, of not standard-rating currently zero-rated items in 1993-94. These estimates can be scaled up or down to provide a rough indication of the potential revenue from applying any particular rate of VAT to these items except that the figures make no allowance for changes in behaviour.

Tobacco

Sir Russell Johnston: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what revenue is obtained from excise duty and value added tax on tobacco.

Sir John Cope: The information available is as follows:

	Tobacco Duty Receipts £m	*VAT on tobacco expenditure* £m
1992-93	6,041	1,520

Value added tax has been estimated from Central Statistical Office figures on consumers' expenditure on tobacco products.

Family Incomes

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer of 25 February, *Official Report*, column 677 on the number of families with children with taxable incomes below the income tax threshold.

Mr. Dorrell: In 1993-94 it is estimated that approximately 1·9 million single parents and married couples with children have no income tax liability. These represent about a quarter of all families with children.

Invalidity Benefit

Mr. Betts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to tax invalidity benefit.

Mr. Dorrell: It remains the Government's intention to bring invalidity benefit into taxation at a suitable opportunity.

Enterprise Zones

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the rules and other guidance covering access to tax reliefs on developments in enterprise zones whose time has expired.

Mr. Dorrell: A person incurring capital expenditure on the construction of a building in an enterprise zone under a contract entered into during the life of the zone is entitled to claim the 100 per cent. capital allowances available, provided that the expenditure is incurred within 10 years of the expiry of the zone.

One hundred per cent. allowances are also available for expenditure on an enterprise zone building purchased unused, or within two years of first use, provided that the construction expenditure was incurred during the 10-year life of the zone—or was incurred within 10 years of the expiry of the zone under a contract entered into during its life.

I have placed in the Library a copy of the Inland Revenue press release of 16 December 1991 which gives details of these rules.

Inland Revenue Staff

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many collection staff were working for the Inland Revenue in each year since 1979; and how many were working in the areas of *(a)* capital gains tax, *(b)* schedule D tax, *(c)* corporation tax, *(d)* PAYE and *(e)* national insurance contributions in each year.

Mr. Dorrell: Excluding staff employed on central administration, the table sets out the total numbers of Inland Revenue staff engaged on the collection of tax within the Department's accounts offices, local office network, and enforcement offices for each year since 1978-79 and how many were working in the areas of *(a)* capital gains tax, *(b)* schedule D tax, *(c)* corporation tax, and *(d)* PAYE in each year. Under *(d)* the figures include staff used in collecting PAYE from employers and a relatively small number of schedule E tax assessments. As resource usage on national insurance contribution work is incidental to mainstream tax collection it is not separately recorded.

Year	*Total*	*Capital gains*	*Schedule D tax*	*Corporation tax*	*PAYE*
1978-79	11,041	135	5,873	560	4,473
1979-80	10,648	148	5,701	584	4,215
1980-81	10,222	143	5,529	597	3,953
1981-82	10,124	126	5,747	409	3,842
1982-83	10,221	116	5,673	390	4,042
1983-84	10,171	113	5,570	394	4,094
1984-85	9,339	92	4,674	557	4,016
1985-86	8,443	92	4,596	559	3,196
1986-87	7,989	85	4,472	530	2,902
1987-88	7,795	105	4,250	538	2,902
1988-89	7,866	121	4,243	571	2,931
1989-90	7,879	92	4,243	570	2,974
1990-91	7,846	79	4,410	549	2,808
1991-92	8,187	70	4,376	532	3,209
1992-93	8,410	69	4,730	492	3,119

Tax Recovery

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the amounts of unpaid capital gains tax, schedule D tax, corporation tax, PAYE, and national insurance currently being actively pursued by the Inland Revenue by way of court actions and other methods of recovery and corresponding figures for each year since 1979.

Mr. Dorrell: The information required is not available in the form requested.

Beverages Order

Dame Peggy Fenner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what consultations he has had with manufacturers or retailers regarding the extension of value added tax to freshly squeezed orange juice by the VAT Beverages Order 1993;

(2) what consultations he has had with consumers' associations regarding the extension of the range of value added tax to freshly squeezed orange juice by the VAT Beverages Order 1993; what assessment he has made of the effect of the change on consumers' choice; and if he will make it his policy to zero rate freshly squeezed orange juice and other additive free products.

Sir John Cope: Representatives of the freshly squeezed orange juice industry put their case to me on 28 October. It was not appropriate to consult consumers' associations about a tax change of this kind, nor is it possible to make an accurate assessment of the effect on consumers' choice. The order ensures that all fruit juices, however they are produced, are treated equally and taxed at the standard rate of VAT.

Dame Peggy Fenner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what consultations he has had with health experts regarding the effect of the VAT Beverages Order 1993 on the proposals made in the "The Health of the Nation" document for the promotion of healthy eating and drinking.

Sir John Cope: I am advised that there are no significant differences between the nutritional value of freshly pressed fruit juices and fruit juices produced from concentrates.

Dame Peggy Fenner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the products which were formerly zero rated for VAT which will become subject to the full rate of VAT under the VAT Beverages Order 1993.

Sir John Cope: The order extends the standard rate of VAT to freshly squeezed fruit juices and to certain pasteurised fruit juices which a VAT tribunal recently decided were zero rated.

EC Contributions

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement setting out the basis on which EC contributions are calculated and the payments made on each resource base, in the most recent annual period for which figures are available.

Sir John Cope: Contributions to the European Community budget are determined by the own resources decision—council decision 88/376/EEC, Euratom and the regulations governing the implementation of that decision —council regulations (EEC, Euratom) Nos. 1552/89 and 1553/89. The European Community's own resources comprise agricultural and sugar levies; customs duties; a VAT-based resource; and a GNP-based resource. Estimates of agricultural and sugar levies and of customs duties are entered into the annual EC budget; but payments by member states are made on the basis of amounts actually collected. VAT and GNP resource contributions are based on estimates of VAT and GNP bases and are normally adjusted, to reflect outturn, in the following budgetary year.

The payments made by the United Kingdom for each resource base in 1992-93 were:

	£ million
Agricultural and Sugar Levies	203
Customs Duties	1,603
VAT-based resource	4,522
GNP-based resource	960

The United Kingdom also received refunds of £312 million in December 1992 in respect of 1991 VAT and GNP contributions. The United Kingdom's abatement totalled £1,993 million.

PAYE and National Insurance

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the amounts of PAYE and national insurance written off for each year since 1975.

Mr. Dorrell: The amounts of PAYE and NIC remitted or written off since 1975 are as follows:

Year	*PAYE amount in £ thousands*	*Class 1 and 1A NIC amount in £ thousands*
1975	n/a	n/a
1976	n/a	n/a
1977	n/a	n/a
1978	n/a	n/a
1979	n/a	n/a
1980	9,914	1,056
1981	11,432	1,158
1982	15,281	1,261
1983	22,622	1,555
1984	33,312	1,971
1985	46,695	2,213
1986	60,915	4,377
1987	92,560	8,514
1988	130,724	15,894
1989	122,890	15,127
1990	107,091	17,239
1991	135,258	21,644
1992	381,172	32,570

Separate figures for PAYE and NIC for the years 1975-1979 are no longer available in the form requested.

Business Cycle

Dr. Berry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will provide for each of the last four cyclical downturns the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development estimates of the output gap at the trough of the cycle, as a percentage of trend gross domestic product, for the United States of America, Japan, Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom.

Mr. Nelson: OECD estimates of the output gap for the major seven economies in the current cycle and at the troughs of the previous three economic cycles were published in the OECD "Economic Outlook 52" (December 1992).

Housing Investment

Mr. Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received from the National Federation of Housing Associations, the Institute of Housing and the House Builders Federation on levels of housing investment; what reply he is sending; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Portillo: My right hon. and learned Friend has received a number of representations on housing investment in recent weeks, all of which are considered carefully. It would not be appropriate to comment further in advance of the Budget.

Corporation Tax

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the take-up of the increased capital allowances against corporation tax announced in the 1992 "Autumn Statement" for the most recent periods for which

statistics are available; what was *(a)* the estimated cost and *(b)* the actual cost for the period; what is his latest estimate of the full year cost of the scheme and what was the cost budgeted; and what is his estimate of the difference between the cost of the enhanced allowances regime and that of the allowances it replaced, on the assumption that those had applied in the current year.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Available estimates of the direct revenue effects of enhanced capital allowances announced in the 1992 "Autumn Statement" are as follows. The figures cover both companies and unincorporated businesses.

£ million (yield +ve/cost −ve)

	1993-94	*1994-95*	*1995-96*
Latest estimates	−200	−700	+50
Original estimates	−200	−500	+50

The original estimates were published in the "Autumn Statement" 1992 and in table 4B.1 of the "Financial Statement and Budget Report" 1993-94. The latest estimates are provisional and mainly reflect increased estimates of the levels of profitability. Information is not yet available from tax assessments for the relevant period.

The accrual costs of all capital allowances are given in table 1.6 and appendix B1 of "Inland Revenue Statistics 1993".

Mr. Betts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the various reliefs and exemptions on corporation tax; and what will be the cost of each to the Exchequer *(a)* in 1993-94 and *(b)* in 1994-95 if unchanged.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* Costs to the Exchequer in 1993-94 and 1994-95 of tax expenditures and structural reliefs will largely depend on costs accruing for 1992-93 and 1993-94 respectively, because corporation tax is payable nine months after the end of a company's accounting period.

Estimated costs accruing for 1992-93 and 1993-94 are published in table 1.6 and appendices B1 and B2 of "Inland Revenue Statistics 1993".

Where the costs of the main reliefs include both income tax and corporation tax, the amounts for corporation tax are as follows:

£ million

	1992-93	*1993-94*
Capital Allowances	11,750	13,150
Double Taxation Relief	2,300	2,300

London Taxation

Sir Michael Neubert: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his latest estimate of the annual total of *(a)* tax revenues contributed by London to the national exchequer and *(b)* receipts by London in Government grants and other public expenditure.

Mr. Portillo *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* Estimates of total tax receipts and public spending are not available on a regional basis.

NORTHERN IRELAND

A8 (Traffic Flow)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will publish details of the most recent traffic flow survey on the A8, Larne-Belfast road, County Antrim.

Mr. Atkins: The information requested is as follows:

Date of survey and location	*Annual average daily traffic flow*
December 1992	
At Drumnahoe north-east of the junction with the A36	13,750
June 1993	
At Moss road junction	12,282
December 1992	
North of Bruslee	8,350
December 1992	
Between Corr's corner and B56 junction	13,330

Civil Servants (Foreign Office)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants with Foreign Office experience have worked in the Northern Ireland Office in each of the last 10 years.

Sir John Wheeler: The number of civil servants who have been on loan to the Northern Ireland Office from the Foreign Office in each of the last 10 years is:

Year	*Number*
1984	3
1985	3
1986	1
1987	1
1988	3
1989	2
1990	2
1991	1
1992	1
1993	1

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants transferred from the Northern Ireland Office to the Foreign Office in each of the last 10 years.

Sir John Wheeler: Records were only computerised three years ago, but it is believed that one transferred in 1989 and one in 1990.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants have transferred from the Foreign Office to the Northern Ireland Office in each of the last 10 years.

Sir John Wheeler: During the last 10 years only one civil servant currently employed by the Northern Ireland Office has transferred from the Foreign Office.

Information from the records of past Northern Ireland Office employees could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Unemployment

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to reduce unemployment in the Province; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: Over the year to September 1993 there has been a welcome fall of 2,400—2·2 per cent .—in seasonally adjusted unemployment in Northern Ireland.

Further reductions in unemployment in Northern Ireland will depend on the achievement of higher levels of economic growth leading to increased employment opportunities, and on Northern Ireland industry becoming more internationally competitive.

The Government's strategy to achieve this includes helping companies to identify and remove obstacles to growth; encouraging inward investment; increasing exports; building up management and work force skills; developing and enterprise culture; and supporting innovation and research and development. Help is available in each of these areas for activities which will improve business performance.

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the latest unemployment figures in the Province.

Mr. Atkins: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Heywood and Middleton (Mr. Callaghan) on 2 November.

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what is the level of unemployment in the construction industry in the Province; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: At 9 September there were 18,122 unemployed construction workers in Northern Ireland, representing a decrease of 227 on the previous month and a fall of 920 from September 1992.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will publish a table showing whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests of each executive non-departmental public body for which his Department is responsible.

Sir John Wheeler *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The information is set out in the table.

Executive NDPB	*Attend board/ committee meetings*	*Inspect the minutes of meetings*	*Statutory right to Inspect the annual reports*	*Inspect the annual accounts*	*Inspect a register . . of Members' interests*
National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting for Northern Ireland	No	No	No	No	No
Mental Health Commission for Northern Ireland	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Local Enterprise Development Unit (LEDU)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Fair Employment Commission (FEC)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
General Consumer Council (GCC)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Northern Ireland Consumer Committee for Electricity	[1]Yes	No	No	No	No
Health and Safety Agency (HSA)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Labour Relations Agency (LRA)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Enterprise Ulster (EU)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Ulster Sheltered Employment Ltd. (USEL)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Laganside	No	No	No	No	No
Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Fire Authority	[2]Yes [3]No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	No	No	No	Yes	No
Agricultural Research Institute for Northern Ireland	No	No	No	No	No
Agricultural Wages Board for Northern Ireland	No	No	No	No	No
Fisheries Conservancy Board for Northern Ireland	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Foyle Fisheries Commission	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Livestock Marketing Commission for Northern Ireland	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority	No	No	No	No	No
Pig Production Development Committee	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	No	No	No	Yes	No
Vaughan's Charity	No	No	No	No	No
Public Service Training School	No	No	No	No	No
Education and Library Boards (5)	[4]Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools	No	No	No	No	No
Northern Ireland Schools Examinations and Assessment Council	No	No	No	Yes	No
Arts Council for Northern Ireland	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Sports Council for Northern Ireland	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Youth Council for Northern Ireland	No	No	No	Yes	No
Ulster Museum	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Ulster Folk and Transport Museum	No	No	No	Yes	No
Police Authority for Northern Ireland	No	No	No	Yes	No
Independent Commission for Police Complaints	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

[1] Public excluded when business is of a confidential nature.
[2] Board meetings.
[3] Committee meetings.
[4] Except for the meetings of the teaching appointments committee.

EMPLOYMENT

Health and Safety Executive

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the total amount budgeted for consultants in the Health and Safety Executive in 1993-94; and if he will list all those consultants employed this year so far.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I understand that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has no separate budget for consultants. Consultants employed this year so far are listed:

Total Quality Management International
The P. A. Consulting Group
Dr. E. G. Masdin
Patrick Thomas Consultants
Shreeveport Ltd.
KPMG
Denham Nash
The Capita Group plc
W. S. Atkins
Keisley Harris Ltd.
Touche Ross

So far this year, HSE has spent some £99,000 with these companies.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what effect the market-testing programme at the Health and Safety Executive headquarters at Bootle is expected to have on the numbers of staff employed by the executive.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Given the competitive nature of market testing, it is not possible to predict the outcome of particular tests. Tests completed or approaching completion which affect staffing at the Health and Safety Executive's Bootle headquarters show a saving of four posts. A further 99 posts are covered by market tests now in hand.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what restrictions have been placed on the recruitment of Health and Safety Executive staff since August.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: It is for the Health and Safety Commission and Executive to decide how to deploy their staff and other resources in managing their grant in aid.

Unemployment Benefit

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is his Department's policy in respect of benefit eligibility towards unemployed people who make themselves completely unemployable by their appearance.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mr. David Atkinson, dated 3 November 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the policy in respect of benefit eligibility towards unemployed people who make themselves completely unemployable by their appearance. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

A client can be held to have neglected to avail themself of an employment opportunity if, because of their unreasonable conduct, an offer of employment is withdrawn or a prospective employer considers them unsuitable. In such cases they can be disqualified from receiving unemployment benefit for up to 26 weeks.

We cannot enforce a set standard of dress to clients using our services. However, we expect clients to dress appropriately for job interviews.

In addition when someone refuses an offer of employment brought to their notice by us, unless they can show good cause for their refusal, they can be disqualified from receiving unemployment benefit for up to 26 weeks. When offering a vacancy we are expected to consider whether the individual, given their background and experience, could reasonably be expected to undertake the work.

Whether these rules apply in individual cases is for the independent adjudicating authorities to decide. These authorities are in the first place an adjudication officer; on appeal a Social Security Appeal Tribunal; and on further appeal, on a point of law only, a Social Security Commissioner. The independence of these authorities prevents me or any Minister from intervening in or commenting on their decisions.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

THORP

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment, pursuant to his answer of 21 October, *Official Report*, column *333*, what meetings he has held with the trade unions at Sellafield on the thermal oxide reprocessing plant.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: None.

Books (VAT)

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what representations he has received about the effect on the level of employment in publishing and bookselling sectors of the imposition of value added tax on books.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I have not received any such representations other than my hon. Friend's recent parliamentary question on this matter.

Construction Industry (Deaths)

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many deaths have taken place in England and Wales this year in the construction industry at the latest date; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Figures on fatal and major injuries for all industry sectors are published annually. Reliable information for the current year is not yet available. Provisional figures for the fiscal year ending 31 March 1993 will be included in the Health and Safety

Commission's annual report which is due to be published before the end of the year. A copy will be placed in the Library.

Public Investment

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list those public investment projects within his Department's responsibility which have attracted private capital and have been commenced since the 1992 autumn statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The private finance initiative, which was announced in the 1992 autumn statement, is an important tool which will lever private finance into the public sector. Although the Department has, as yet, no projects which have attracted private capital, we do keep these matters under review to ensure that the Department provides the best possible value for money. As significant projects arise, or equipment comes up for replacement, we will consider in particular the opportunities for private investment. For example, the in-house bid team of the Department's information systems branch will consider the private finance initiative further in the context of its market test; and we shall be looking at the possibility of using the initiative for contract energy management projects in the future.

Ministers' Overseas Journeys

Mr. Roy Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what journeys abroad, involving public expenditure, he and other Ministers in the Department have made since 9 April 1992; what were the dates of the journeys and the places visited; what was the purpose of the journey in each case; by whom the Minister was accompanied, and what additional public expenditure was involved; and what was the total cost of each journey made abroad by each Minister.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 26 October 1993]:* Information is not available in the form requested. However, the information now available in departmental records from 9 April 1992 to June 1993 is given in the table, and as soon as costs are available for each of the remaining visits to date, I will write to the hon. Member.

Private Office
Overseas travel record

Travelling Minister(s)	*Dates*		*Places visited*	*Purpose of visit*	*Size of delegation*	*Visit expenditure £*
Secretary of State	29 April 1992	30 April 1992	Luxembourg	Social Affairs Council	6	2,231
Minister of State	11 June 1992	12 June 1992	Geneva, Switzerland	ILO Conference	2	1,504
Secretary of State	11 June 1992	11 June 1992	Madrid, Spain	Social Affairs bilateral	3	3,615
Secretary of State	12 June 1992	12 June 1992	Rome, Italy	Social Affairs bilateral	3	
Secretary of State	16 June 1992	16 June 1992	Rotterdam, Netherlands	Social Affairs bilateral	3	1,668
Secretary of State	23 June 1992	24 June 1992	Luxembourg	Social Affairs Council	7	2,393
Minister of State	6 September 1992	10 September 1992	Poland and Bulgaria	Signing of joint statement of agreement	2	2,200
Secretary of State	8 September 1992	9 September 1992	Paris, France	Social Affairs bilateral, Training issues	3	1,874
Secretary of State	14 September 1992	17 September 1992	Russia	UK Know How Fund	4	13,281
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Lords)	21 September 1992	23 September 1992	France/Belgium	Fact finding visit/ Policy development	2	1,585
Secretary of State	22 September 1992	22 September 1992	Brussels, Belgium	Informal Social Affairs meeting	5	1,841
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State	26 September 1992	3 October 1992	Japan	Fact finding visit/ Policy development	2	15,823
Minister of State	27 September 1992	2 October 1992	USA	Fact finding visit/ Policy development	2	13,143
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Lords)	18 November 1992	20 November 1992	Poland	Opening of Polish Ministry of Labour Training Centre	2	1,501
Secretary of State Minister of State	3 December 1992	3 December 1992	Brussels, Belgium	Social Affairs Council	8	2,240
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Lords)	1 April 1993	8 April 1993	USA/Canada	Fact finding visit/ Policy development	2	15,495
Secretary of State	5 April 1993	6 April 1993	Luxembourg	Social Affairs Council	7	1,163
Secretary of State	30 April 1993	30 April 1993	Paris, France	Social Affairs bilateral	4	1,141

Travelling Minister(s)	Dates		Places visited	Purpose of visit	Size of delegation	Visit expenditure £
Minister of State	3 May 1993	4 May 1993	Nyborg, Denmark	Informal Social Affairs Council	7	3,881
Secretary of State	5 May 1993	5 May 1993	Cologne, Germany	Social Affairs bilateral	7	
Secretary of State Minister of State	31 May 1993	1 June 1993	Luxembourg	Social Affairs Council	9	4,049
Minister of State	3 June 1993	4 June 1993	Budapest, Hungary	UK Know How Fund (opening of Flexible Learning Centre)	2	2,387
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State	9 June 1993	10 June 1993	Geneva, Switzerland	ILO Conference	1	699

SOCIAL SECURITY

National Insurance

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is his current estimate of the level of the Treasury supplement necessary in 1994-95, expressed as a percentage of benefit outgoings, based on the assumption of indexation for all contribution limits and thresholds and the effects of changes in national insurance contribution rates announced in the 1993 Budget; and what would be the combined rate of employer/employee contributions necessary in order to achieve a balanced national insurance fund without the Exchequer contribution.

Mr. Hague: It is estimated that a Treasury grant equivalent to 12·5 per cent. of expected benefit expenditure would be needed to balance the national insurance fund in 1994-95. If the grant were not available, a combined employer/employee contribution rate of between (the contribution percentages vary according to whether there is an increase in the main primary or secondary rate, or a combination of both) 22·7 and 23·4 per cent. would be needed to raise the same level of income. Estimates are based on the March 1993 "Financial Statement and Budget Report" assumptions.

Benefits

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the size of the *(a)* earnings and *(b)* maintenance disregards in each means-tested benefit scheme; and how these disregards vary for different categories of claimant.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the table.

Client Group	Earnings Disregard (Note 3) £	Maintenance Disregard (Note 1) £
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit		
Lone Parents	25	15
Disabled	15	15
Carers	15	15
Specialist occupations (Note 2)	15	15
Other couples	10	15
Other single people	5	nil
Income Support		
Lone parents	15	nil
Disabled	15	nil
Carers	15	nil
Specialist occupations (Note 2)	15	nil
Unemployed couples (over 2 years)	15	nil
Unemployed couples (under 2 years)	5	nil
Other	5	nil
Family Credit		
Lone parents	69	15
Couples with children	69	15
Disability working allowance		
Lone parents	69	15
Couples with children	69	15
Single (no children)	41·40	nil

Notes:

1. The £15 maintenance disregard in housing benefit, council tax benefit and disability working allowance applies only where there is a child or young person in the household.
2. Specialist occupations are reservists, part-time firemen, part-time lifeboatmen and auxiliary coastguards.
3. The income disregard in family credit and disability working allowance applies to all income, including earnings, not otherwise disregarded.
4. The disregards apply to the family unit as a whole, i.e., to the total earnings received and the total maintenance received.
5. People receiving income support are entitled to receive maximum housing benefit and council tax benefit without their resources being assessed by the local authority.

Invalidity Benefit

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people previously receiving invalidity benefit have been taken off that benefit on the grounds of being capable of work in each month over the last two years.

Mr. Scott: The information is not available in the form requested. Quarterly estimates of sickness and invalidity benefit claims disallowed because the claimant is not incapable of work are being collected from April 1993. The latest available estimate, for the quarter ending 30 June 1993, shows 15,400 such disallowances, based on a 5 per cent. sample of examinations, rounded to the nearest hundred.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is his Department's policy on counting voluntary work as proof of capacity for work; and if he will make a statement about the effect of his policy on recipients of invalidity benefit.

Mr. Scott: People receiving invalidity benefit may undertake voluntary work, so long as they continue to satisfy the entitlement conditions for receiving the benefit. Recipients who are thinking of doing some voluntary work are advised to discuss the matter first with their doctor, before checking with their local social security office to find out if it will affect their benefit.

Income Support

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish a table showing in respect of payment of income support for mortgage interest, for each financial year since 1988, the total amount paid, the number of new claims, the number of claims in payment and the average weekly payment.

Mr. Burt: The available information is in the table.

Year	*Number receiving IS help with mortgage interest*	*Total amount paid*	*Average weekly amount*	
			Cases with full interest	*Cases with 50 per cent. interest*
	000s	*£ million*	*£*	*£*
1988	300	286	18·56	16·71
1989	281	353	24·46	21·86
1990	310	553	34·42	33·69
1991	411	949	46·34	35·61
1992	499	1,143	46·01	30·59

Notes:

1. Figures are for the amount of mortgage interest that is included in the IS assessment.
2. Figures are from the annual statistical enquiry (ASE), a 1 per cent. sample survey of claimants receiving regular weekly payments of IS in May each year.
3. Information on the number of new claims with mortgage interest is not available.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the tariff income schedule of cuts in savings within the income support means tests; what is the equivalent system of savings assessment in the housing benefit system; on what dates the schemes were last revised; and what plans he has to review the assessment of savings in means-tested benefits.

Mr. Burt: In all the income-related benefits, capital up to £3,000 is ignored. In income support (IS), deductions from benefit of £1 a week are made for each £250, or part of £250, of capital between £3,000 and the upper capital limit of £8,000. Similar rules apply in housing benefit (HB), but the 65 per cent. taper reduces the effect of the deductions, and the upper capital limit is set at £16,000. These rules were last revised in April 1990 when the upper capital limits were raised to their present levels, from £6,000 in IS and from £8,000 in HB. The rules are kept under review but we have no current plans for change.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish figures indicating the income support and social fund budgets allocated to the social security offices in the Ynys Môn constituency during each of the last two years; and what was the monthly amount spent on income support and the social fund by each office in that period.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the social fund is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from M. Bichard to Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones, dated 2 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions raised about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking if he will publish figures indicating the income support and Social Fund budgets allocated to the social security offices in the Ynys Mon constituency during each of the last two years; and what was the monthly amount spent on income support and Social Fund by each office in that period.

I should explain that Social Fund (SF) discretionary budgets are allocated to each Benefits Agency District rather than individual offices. In the case of Gwyneddigion District, which includes the constituency of Ynys Mon, it is therefore only possible to show the information for the whole District.

I enclose details of the SF budgets allocated to the District, together with details of monthly expenditure for each of the financial years 1991/92 and 1992/93. The provisional data for the current financial year to the end of September 1993 is also included.

Turning to Income Support (IS), I should explain that IS is a demand led benefit and therefore not subject to a cash limit, as is the Social Fund. The information requested, regarding the monthly amount of IS spent, is therefore not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. This is because the details of benefit paid could only be obtained by examining all of the cases held at the Gwyneddigion District.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Gwyneddigion District.
Loans allocation—£826,353 Grants allocation—£313,934

Table of monthly expenditure

Period—1991-92	*Loans*	*Grants*
April	46,387	23,080
May	46,816	19,504
June	44,856	24,238
July	47,266	26,876
August	48,098	18,642
September	50,401	28,532
October	75,693	30,460
November	87,945	31,814
December	75,435	27,100
January	60,463	28,110
February	85,910	23,007
March	105,279	32,533
Total	774,549	313,896

All figures are rounded to the nearest pound.

Gwyneddigion District.
Loans allocation—£890,128 Grants allocation—£408,054

Table of monthly expenditure

Period—1992-93	*Loans*	*Grants*
April	88,943	33,301
May	74,882	34,968
June	76,766	39,139
July	75,735	36,361
August	71,602	21,859
September	79,507	32,860
October	61,853	34,231
November	72,290	38,884
December	72,156	36,643
January	50,924	31,571
February	69,478	38,202
March	95,945	30,011
Total	890,081	408,030

All figures are rounded to the nearest pound.

Gwyneddigion District.
Loans allocation—£998,150 Grants allocation—£428,457

Table of monthly expenditure

Period—1993-94	*Loans*	*Grants*
April	81,519	31,470
May	73,494	32,195
June	79,468	40,082
July	75,000	33,418
August	54,375	23,672
September	87,180	40,535
Total to date	376,111	201,372

All figures are rounded to the nearest pound.

Ministers' Overseas Journeys

Mr. Roy Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what journeys abroad, involving public expenditure, he and other Ministers in the Department have made since 9 April 1992; what were the dates of the journeys and the places visited; what was the purpose of the journey in each case; by whom the Minister was accompanied, and what additional public expenditure was involved; and what was the total cost of each journey made abroad by each Minister.

Mr. Hague *[holding answer 26 October 1993]:* The available information is in the table.

Date of Journey	*Places visited*	*Purpose of visit*	*Number accompanying Minister*	*Total departmental expenditure* £
Secretary of State				
15 April 1992	France	Recalled from France to attend Cabinet and departmental meetings.	—	1,045·00
1 September 1992	France	Recalled from France for departmental meetings.	—	2,980·00
29 January to 1 February 1993	Zurich	To attend the World Economic Forum.	—	439·41
7 April 1993	France	Recalled from France for the launch of the Child Support Agency.	—	324·10
Minister of State				
20 to 21 May 1992	Limerick	Council of Europe Conference of Social Security Ministers.	—	143·35
23 to 24 May 1992	Luxembourg	Meeting of Social Affairs Council.	2	1,006·86
2 to 5 September 1992	Barcelona	Parolympic games and bilateral meeting with Spanish Minister of State.	2	1,303·68
7 to 11 October 1992	Montreal	International Ministers meeting.	2	4,473·90
11 to 13 October 1992	New York	UN General Assembly.	2	3,012·90
8 to 9 December 1992	Paris	OECD meeting.	1	456·78
27 May to 6 June 1993	China Hong Kong	Visit counterpart Minister of State for Disabled. Meeting with C. Patten. Visit to Rehabilitation Services for Disabled. Meeting with Secretary of State for Health and Welfare of Hong Kong.	6	13,926·30
Parliamentary Under-Secretaries				
28 January 1993	Copenhagen, Denmark	Social Affairs Council Meeting.	4	4,500·00
1 February 1993	Strasbourg	Open Beveridge exhibition.	2	1,125·30
26 to 27 February 1993	Germany	Bilateral talks with German counterparts.	2	332·50
28 April 1993	Republic of Ireland	Meeting board of management trust: war pensions. Visit Leopardspark hospital. Meeting WP advisory committee and voluntary organisations.	1	460·00
15 May 1993	Brussels	To see Belgian Social Security Minister to discuss draft EC Council on resolution on flexible retirement pension.	2	590·52
28 to 30 September 1993	Republic of Ireland	Informal talks with Minister of State for Social Welfare and visit to community development programme—Dublin.	1	426·00

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Turkey

12. **Mr. Austin-Walker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received recently regarding violation of human rights in Turkey; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We regularly receive representations about alleged human rights abuses against Kurds in Turkey.

We are concerned by all allegations of human rights abuses in Turkey, including those perpetrated by the PKK. The Turkish authorities are aware of the importance we attach to the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Russia

13. **Mr. Brazier:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent of political stability in Russia; and what evidence there is of military and security commanders acting without political authorisation.

Mr. Hurd: The prospects for political stability in Russia are now better than for some time. The Russian people will be able next month to vote in elections to a new Parliament and to express their views on a new Constitution. The Russian military and security services have, for the most part, remained politically neutral. In bringing an end to the confrontation with Parliament, President Yeltsin had the backing of the Ministers of Defence and Security.

27. **Mrs. Helen Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to ensure the development of an open and full democracy in Russia.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have made clear to President Yeltsin and members of the Russian Government on many occasions our full support for the process of economic and democratic reform in Russia. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs raised this most recently with the Russian Foreign Minister during his visit to the United Kingdom on 26 October. The Russian people will go to the polls on 12 December to elect deputies to a new two-chamber Parliament and to vote on the adoption of a new constitution. This is a very real step forward in terms of building a democratic society based on the rule of law, to which President Yeltsin is committed. International observers have been invited to ensure the elections are free and fair. The United Kingdom will take part in this.

GATT Negotiations

14. **Mr. Riddick** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect of the outcome of the GATT negotiations on the conduct of European Community business.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The European Council last week underlined the real economic benefits a positive outcome would bring to the Community in our efforts to restore growth, raise competitivity and reduce unemployment. Heads of Government underlined their commitment to reach a global, durable and balanced agreement this year. The Commission is working strenuously to this end.

Malta

15. **Mr. Pawsey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many official visits have been made to Malta over the past three years and by whom; and what future visits are planned.

Mr. Hurd: During this period, in addition to the highly successful state visit last year, four Ministers have been to Malta and there have been a number of visits by officials. I plan to visit Malta early in 1994.

Child Migrants

16. **Mr. Hinchliffe:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff at the high commissions in Australia, Canada and New Zealand are currently involved in discussions in relation to the British child migrant scheme.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: No staff at the high commissions in Australia, Canada and New Zealand are currently involved in discussions about the child migrant scheme. In July 1993, the high commission in Ottawa dealt with an inquiry from a Canadian television station following the showing on British television of the ABC/BBC mini-series "The Leaving of Liverpool". In Canberra, a member of the high commission was involved—most recently, in September—in obtaining information from the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs about the Child Migrants Trust in Australia. The information was passed to the Department of Health in London.

Exporters

17. **Mr. Lidington:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he has taken to improve the quality of help given to British exporters by Her Majesty's diplomatic service.

Mr. Goodlad: Since the establishment of a joint FCO/DTI directorate to co-ordinate overseas trade services, there have been significant improvements in the quality and range of services offered to exporters. There is a much greater emphasis on quality and speed of service, new services are being introduced, staff training has been overhauled and contacts with industry, trade associations and chambers of commerce enhanced. Feedback is very positive. Ninety per cent of our customers surveyed would use our services again.

Yugoslavia

18. **Mr. Mullin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he next expects to discuss the situation in Bosnia with his NATO colleagues.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs will attend the North Atlantic Council ministerial meeting on 2 December. Although the agenda has not been finalised, we expect that the situation in Bosnia will be discussed at this meeting.

19. **Mr. Skinner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with other Foreign Secretaries regarding former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The situation in the former Yugoslavia was discussed by EC Foreign Ministers at the Foreign Affairs Council in Luxembourg on 26 October.

25. **Mr. Raynsford:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement about the effectiveness of the UN safe havens in Bosnia.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: United Nations Security Council resolution (SCR) 824 of 6 May 1993 established Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, and the towns of Bihac, Srebrenica, Gorazde, Tuzla and Zepa as safe areas. SCR836 of 4 June expanded the mandate of the United Nations protection force in Bosnia to include deterring attacks against the safe areas and it is clear that the presence of—even small numbers of—UNPROFOR personnel has reduced the willingness of parties to attack safe areas.

Taiwan

20. **Mr. Hendry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on relations with the Government of the Republic of China—Taiwan.

Mr. Goodlad: We have no diplomatic relations with Taiwan. There are however growing commercial and cultural links reflecting Taiwan's increasing economic importance.

Nigeria

21. **Mr. Hunter:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a further statement on the political situation in Nigeria.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: While welcoming the withdrawal of military government on 27 August, we remain concerned about the prospects for democracy in Nigeria. A peaceful transfer of power to a democratically accountable government is the only way to maintain a strong and united Nigeria.

Far East (Exports)

22. **Mr. Harris:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department is doing to assist promotion of exports in the far east.

Mr. Goodlad: All FCO posts in the far east have export promotion as a top priority. Among other tasks, they seek out export opportunities, advise British companies on the business to be won in their markets, lobby on their behalf for major contracts and against discrimination and organise visits by ministers and trade missions with the specific object of winning business. I am happy to say that our exports to China are 90 per cent. up this year, to the Philippines 69 per cent., to Thailand 46 percent., to South Korea and Malaysia 32 per cent., to Hong Kong 31 per cent., to Singapore 23 per cent. and to Taiwan 20 per cent.

Middle East

23. **Mr. Spellar:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the latest stage of discussions in the middle east peace process.

30. **Dr. Howells:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress of the middle east peace talks.

37. **Mr. Ernie Ross:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the middle east peace negotiations.

39. **Mr. Paice:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the middle east peace process.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have warmly welcomed the agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and welcome the work of the joint committees on implementation of this agreement. We continue to impress on all parties the importance of rapid progress towards a comprehensive settlement.

Syria

24. **Mrs. Dunwoody:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will seek to persuade Syria to participate in the current round of peace talks.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs visited Syria on 22 to 24 October. He met President Assad and Foreign Minister Shara'a. He emphasised the importance we attach to early progress on the Syria track, and momentum more generally in the peace process.

South Africa

26. **Mr. Rathbone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the Government are taking to contribute to progress towards full democracy in South Africa.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs gave earlier today to the hon. Member for Chelmsford (Mr. Burns).

29. **Mr. Streeter:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress towards democracy in South Africa.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We welcome the passage of legislation by the South African parliament on 23 September to establish the transitional executive council. This is a tremendously important step and puts South Africa firmly on the road to non-racial democracy. We now await agreement on the interim consititution and the Bill of Rights, following which the TEC will come into operation and prepare the way for democratic elections.

Abu Dhabi

28. **Mr. Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the United Kingdom's relations with Abu Dhabi.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Bilateral relations between the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates remain excellent.

Asylum

31. **Mr. Harry Greenway:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he is taking to assist potential asylum seekers in their country of origin; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have obligations towards refugees who are within the United Kingdom or at our ports, but we have no obligation to encourage or assist would-be asylum seekers around the world to come here. Our diplomatic and aid efforts to encourage good government and promote respect for human rights can mitigate the circumstances which give rise to refugee outflows.

Iraq (Arms Sales)

32. **Ms Eagle:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the policy of Her Majesty's Government towards the sale of arms to Iraq.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We strictly implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council under which the sale of arms to Iraq has been prohibited since 6 August 1990.

Cyprus

33. **Mr. Kilfoyle:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had concerning the situation in Cyprus; and if he will make a statement.

36. **Mr. McKelvey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the situation in Cyprus.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs hosted a lunch for the leaders of the two Cypriot communities in Nicosia on 20 October. It provided an opportunity for the leaders to clarify their positions on the set of ideas and confidence-building measures proposed by the UN Secretary-General and for them to discuss ways of moving the process forward. He followed this up when he met the UN Secretary-General in London on 25 October.

Mr. Enright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to secure the withdrawal of the occupying Turkish army from Cyprus.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The United Kingdom supports the call in United Nations Security Council resolution 789 for a reduction in the number of foreign forces stationed in Cyprus. We stand ready, together with other Security Council members, to consider alternative ways to promote the effective implementation of UN resolutions on Cyprus should there be no further progress by the time of the next report to the Security Council by the UN Secretary-General.

Eastern Europe

34. **Mrs. Angela Knight:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress is being made with east European countries to join the European Community.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Last June's Copenhagen European Council agreed that the central European associate countries should join the European Community as soon as they are ready to assume the economic and political obligations of membership.

I very much welcome that decision, for which we had lobbied hard. Our task is now to help the associate countries prepare for membership.

Western Sahara

35. **Mr. Watson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he intends to take to ensure that the Government of Morocco comply with United Nations resolutions on a referendum in Western Sahara.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Both Morocco and Polisario have accepted the United Nations settlement plan but are still engaged in talks with the Secretary-General on its implementation. It is essential that both sides continue to co-operate if there is to be a successful resolution of this dispute.

Haiti

38. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he next expects to visit Haiti to discuss bilateral relations.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs has no plans at present to visit Haiti.

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the current state of diplomatic relations between Her Majesty's Government and Haiti.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Diplomatic relations with Haiti are conducted through our ambassador at Kingston, Jamaica, who frequently visits Haiti, and our vice-consul based in Port au Prince. We support United Nations efforts to restore democratic government to Haiti.

Secret Services (Offices)

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the contracts awarded to *(a)* equip, *(b)* furnish and *(c)* decorate the new Vauxhall Cross offices of the Secret Intelligence Service were awarded in each case to the company submitting the lowest tender.

Mr. Hurd: Contracts for this project were awarded to companies whose tenders met the requirements of the project and represented the best value for money.

Mr Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what companies have been awarded the contracts to *(a)* equip, *(b)* furnish and *(c)* decorate the new Vauxhall Cross offices of the Secret Intelligence Service; and what were the prices of each contract.

Mr. Hurd: I do not propose, for reasons of security and commercial confidentiality, to comment on individual companies awarded contracts for projects on behalf of the security and intelligence agencies.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the total cost of equipping, cabling, decorating and furnishing the new Vauxhall Cross offices of the Secret Intelligence Service.

Mr. Hurd: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith) on 18 October, *Official Report*, column *82*.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the contracts for *(a)* equipping, *(b)* furnishing and *(c)* decorating the new Vauxhall Cross offices of the Secret Intelligence Service have been put out to tender.

Mr. Hurd: These contracts have either been put out to tender or let on a negotiated basis by the project management contractor with firms which were retained from the development stage of the project.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether each of the contracts to *(a)* equip, *(b)* furnish and *(c)* decorate the new Vauxhall Cross, Secret Intelligence Service offices were awarded to British companies.

Mr. Hurd: A number of the contracts for this project were awarded to British companies.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many companies tendered for the contracts to *(a)* equip, *(b)* furnish and *(c)* decorate the new Vauxhall Cross offices of the Secret Intelligence Service; and what were the bids of each unsuccessful tender.

Mr. Hurd: A number of companies tendered for the various contracts, but it would be wrong to comment on individual bids on grounds of security and commercial confidentiality.

Sellafield

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received regarding the problems of proliferation arising from the reprocessing and export of plutonium from Sellafield.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We understand that representations were made on a variety of issues including non-proliferation, during the further round of public consultation on the revised discharge authorisations for Sellafield. These are currently being considered by my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Pakistan

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on current relations between Pakistan and Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We enjoy excellent relations with Pakistan and look forward to working with Ms Bhutto's new Government.

PRIME MINISTER

Joint Intelligence Committee

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Prime Minister if he will outline the functional and departmental composition and internal procedures of the Joint Intelligence Committee.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the booklet on the central intelligence machinery published by HMSO on 1 October.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Prime Minister to which Ministers the Joint Intelligence Committee reports; and which Minister bears the ultimate responsibility for guiding its decisions.

The Prime Minister: I am ultimately responsible for the Joint Intelligence Committee. The committee is not a decision-making body. Its assessments are seen by other Ministers according to the subject matter.

Libel Actions

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister what legal costs have been met from the public purse relating to libel actions involving Government Ministers in the last three years; and how many cases are still in progress.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* No legal costs payable by the public purse have been incurred on libel proceedings involving Government Ministers during the last three years.

EDUCATION

Grant-maintained Schools

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to call in consultants or accountants to assist in, or provide advice on, the organisation of conferences, seminars or workshops on grant-maintained status.

Mr. Robin Squire: None.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 28 October, at columns *744-45*, how many of the grant-maintained schools operating at the end of the last financial year showed *(a)* a financial surplus and *(b)* a financial deficit.

Mr. Robin Squire: None of the 336 grant-maintained schools operating as at 31 March 1993 had a cash deficit.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 28 October, *Official Report*, columns *744-45*, whether he will list the firms of consultants used by his Department to provide basic support for conferences, seminars or workshops on grant-maintained status stating, in each case, the services received and the fees paid.

Mr. Robin Squire: No. The details of contracts between the Department and individual contractors must

be treated as commercial-in-confidence. Payments by the Department for the support services listed in my reply of 28 October—*Official Report*, columns *744-45*—total approximately £180,000 to date.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 28 October, *Official Report*, columns *744-45*, how many of the five representations on the possibility of a role for the Audit Commission in the auditing of accounts of grant-maintained schools were supportive of such a possibility.

Mr. Robin Squire: Four.

DEFENCE

Low Flying

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence at what level of command authorisations for low-level jet flights between the hours of 11 pm and 7 am are required to be taken; and what records are maintained of *(a)* requests for low-level flights in this time period and *(b)* authorisations granted.

Mr. Hanley: Requests for fast jet low flying sorties between the hours of 2300 and 0700 must be made at least 30 days in advance and require the authorisation of Ministry of Defence Air Staff at the appropriate level depending on the nature of the request. The requests and the responses to them are held on departmental files, but separate records are not maintained.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the RAF Support Command list of approved low flying turning points.

Mr. Hanley: There is no such list.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was title and purpose of the exercise involving night low level parachute dropping from a US Air Force C-5 aircraft from RAF Brize Norton and RAF St. Mawgan between 2 and 14 November 1992; how many low-level sorties *(a)* during the day and *(b)* at night were carried out by the aircraft; what was the (i) earliest and (ii) latest time of the day at which low level sorties by the aircraft were booked; and what were the locations of the parachute drop zones used.

Mr. Hanley: The exercise held between 2 and 14 November 1992 was called Bitter Bust and was a joint US/UK forces exercise. During the exercise five low level sorties were flown by C-5 aircraft; three during the day, and two at night. The earliest low level sortie began at 1426, and the latest was completed by 1910. These aircraft carried out two parachute drops during the exercise, both over military training areas; one over Salisbury plain and the other over Weston on the Green.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the measures introduced as part of the citizens charter to improve the responses of his Department to complaints about low flying aircraft.

Mr. Hanley: My Department's contribution to the citizens charter has included the introducation of a target time of four weeks for response to complaints received from members of the public about low flying, in other than exceptional cases.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if Jaguar and Tornado aircrew assigned to operational duties over *(a)* Bosina and *(b)* Northern Iraq are required to qualify or re-qualify to fly at 100 ft above ground level prior to deploying from their bases in the United Kingdom or Germany.

Mr. Hanley: All combat ready RAF fast jet aircrew, except Tornado F3 aircrew, are required to be current in operational low flying down to 100 ft. These aircrew may fly a small number of continuation training sorties before deploying to operational theatres overseas.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the individual low-flying areas which have been surveyed by the RAF police to assess requirements for changes to avoidance areas for low flying within the last three years; and if he will list the dates of the survey of each area.

Mr. Hanley: The individual low flying areas which have been surveyed by the RAF Police within the last three years, and the dates each survey was completed, are as follows:

LFA 7	14 December 1990
LFA 9	30 April 1991
LFA 17	16 May 1991
LFA 14	28 February 1992
LFA 12	3 July 1992
LFA 13	19 August 1992
LFA 1	27 May 1993

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what consideration has been given to opening the airspace of the highlands restricted area to all air operators during the summer months;

(2) what consideration has been given to permitting civil aircraft to enter the highlands restricted area when no military aircraft have booked to use it.

Mr. Hanley: Arrangements already exist for civil aircraft to enter the highlands restricted area, provided that details of the proposed flight are passed to the tactical booking cell at RAF West Drayton in sufficient time to permit military users to be informed of the activity. The arrangements obtain at all times when the area is open to military aircraft.

Mr. Llywd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those aircraft types in United Kingdom military service which are not fitted with a radar altimetre.

Mr. Hanley: Of those aircraft in United Kingdom military service, Bulldog T1, Chipmunk, Dominie T1, Gazelle, Hawk T1, Islander, Jetstream, Tucano T1 and VC10 K2 aircraft are not fitted with a radar altimeter.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what factors are taken into account in the process of decision-making about the introduction of new or revised flow control measures in the United Kingdom low-flying system.

Mr. Hanley: Unidirectional flow controls are established in the United Kingdom low flying system where aircraft may be constrained by narrow valleys or corridors formed by avoidance areas. Consideration may be given to introducing new or revised flow control measures where the introduction of additional avoidance areas further constrains the available airspace, with possible implications for flight safety.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the rules are governing the use as simulated targets of features located in flow control areas of the United Kingdom low-flying system.

Mr. Hanley: Where features used as simulated targets are located in flow control areas of the United Kingdom low-flying system, the aircraft must be flown in compliance with the direction of the flow control.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what records are held of the numbers of flights over Germany by Royal Air Force aircraft at low-level since September 1990.

Mr. Hanley: Records for low-level flights over Germany by Royal Air Force aircraft between September 1990 and April 1992 are incomplete. Records held since April 1992, however, show that some 4,200 sorties have been flown by fast jet aircraft.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the current policy on the maintenance of operational low flying qualifications by individual air crew following successful completion of their initial operational low flying qualification training.

Mr. Hanley: Air crews qualified to conduct operational low flying (OLF) maintain currency by flying a minimum of four overland OLF sorties, with a maximum of six in any six-month period and a maximum of 10 in any 12-month period. OLF currency is valid for six months. Lapsed currency may be regained by Tornado IDS crews flying five OLF sorties, and by Jaguar and Harrier pilots flying four OLF sorties. OLF sorties conducted over the sea do not contribute to the maintenance of OLF currency.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the number of complaints about low flying received from addresses in each of the numbered low flying areas of the United Kingdom during 1992.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested is as follows:

Low flying areas	*Numbers of complaints or inquiries*
1	160
2	916
3	11
4	436
5	467
6	432
7	904
8	255
9	81
11	475
12	272
13	23
14	504
16	486
17	594
18	228

Support Aircraft

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what offensive support roles are performed by *(a)* the Harrier aircraft, *(b)* the Jaguar aircraft and *(c)* the Tornado aircraft; and if he will make a statement on each aircraft type's specific contribution to these roles.

Mr. Hanley: All three aircraft are capable of performing the offensive support roles of close air support, battlefield air interdiction and tactical reconnaissance. Offensive Support is the primary role for Harrier and Jaguar, and it is in this role that they are currently assigned to NATO. The Tornado GR1 aircraft is not currently assigned to the offensive support role; it is concerned primarily with long-range interdiction and reconnaissance.

Airships

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the results of his Department's trials into the suitability for military use of the Skyship 600 airship; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: Further to the reply that my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Defence Procurement gave to the hon. Member on 15 July 1993 at column *637*, the trials are continuing and it will be some time before we are in a position to make any decisions on future operational roles for airships.

Aircraft Noise

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those military airfields in the United Kingdom at which mandatory noise abatement procedures are in force for aircraft during *(a)* approach/landing and *(b)* take-off.

Mr. Hanley: There are no mandatory noise abatement procedures in force at military airfields in the United Kingdom. The Department does, however, have in place extensive measures to minimise the disturbance from aircraft around military airfields, subject to the limitations imposed by the need to maintain operational capability. These measures include extensive sound insulation and compensation schemes and controls on the ground running of engines. These voluntary measures are also followed at United States Air Force (USAF) bases in the United Kingdom. The MoD and USAF keep their operating procedures under constant review and remain committed to minimising the impact of their activity on the general public and to maintaining good relations with their neighbours and local amenities.

Jaguar Aircraft

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes have been made to the planned date of withdrawal from RAF service of the Jaguar aircraft since the end of 1990.

Mr. Hanley: At the end of 1990, we planned to start withdrawing Jaguar from 2001. Current plans assume that Jaguar will start to withdraw from 2004.

Open Skies Agreement

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the outcome of the open skies agreement trial flight over the United Kingdom by a Russian aircraft in June.

Mr. Hanley: A joint Russian/Belarussian inspection team arrived at RAF Brize Norton on 14 June this year to practise the provisions of the open skies treaty. The observation flight took place on 17 June from RAF

Leuchars and, although adverse weather conditions prevented the inspection team from photographing as many of the agreed United Kingdom sites as they had hoped, the exercise was considered a success. The inspection team returned to Russia on 19 June.

Aircraft Accidents

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the definition of a major accident to a British military aircraft includes accidents in which one or more fatalities occur but damage to the military aircraft involved is assessed as less severe than category 4.

Mr. Hanley: Yes.

16 (Reserve) Squadron

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to move No. 16 (Reserve) Squadron from its current location.

Mr. Hanley: None. Current plans assume that No. 16 (Reserve) Squadron will remain at RAF Lossiemouth.

Dominie Aircrew

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Dominie aircrew are currently assigned to maritime patrol duties in wartime; when this role for the Dominie was first introduced; and what is the annual training requirement for aircrew assigned to this role.

Mr. Hanley: Six crews, each of four personnel, are assigned to short range maritime patrol duties in wartime. This role was introduced for the Dominie in the late 1960s. There is no formal additional training requirement.

RAF Lakenheath

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what additional demands for range facilities will result from the deployment of a squadron of US Air Force F-15C fighter aircraft to RAF Lakenheath.

Mr. Hanley: This deployment is not expected to result in any additional demand as the F-15C is an air defence fighter and will not be making use of the RAF's air-to-ground weapons ranges.

Tornado

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many hours have been flown by Tornado GR1 serial number ZA611 since its accident on December 1986; and what was the cost of repairs to the aircraft following that accident.

Mr. Hanley: Since its repair, the aircraft has been placed in temporary storage as a medium-term reserve to cover future attrition within the operational fleet. The aircraft has only flown three hours since its accident. Costs of repair to RAF aircraft are commercial in confidence.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the current requirement for operational low flying training by Royal Air Force Tornado F3 crews.

Mr. Hanley: There is no requirement.

Air Misses

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the effect of the decision in March 1988 to publish reports of air misses involving commercial air transport aircraft on the propensity of military air crew to report air misses with commercial air transport aircraft.

Mr. Hanley: Military air crew continue to report such air misses with the same frequency as before.

RAF Institute of Aviation Medicine

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 26 July, *Official Report*, column *749*, what was the title of the research contract carried out for the RAF Institute of Aviation Medicine by a British university between 1985 and 1991; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The title of the contract was "Circadian rhythms during irregularities of work and rest". The object of the research was to determine the nature and the extent of changes in the amplitude and phase of the circadian rhythm that occur in response to the organisation of the sleep-wake cycle.

Harrier

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the dates of all major accidents to Harrier aircraft since its entry into British military service providing, in each case, an indication of whether the cause was *(a)* aircrew error, *(b)* servicing error, *(c)* natural, operating and medical causes, *(d)* technical failure or *(e)* not positively determined; and which of the accidents occurred during low-level flying.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested is as follows:

Date	*Type*	*[1]Cause*	*[2]Low flying*
6 June 1979	Harrier GR3	AE	No
12 June 1979	Harrier GR3	TF	No
18 July 1979	Harrier GR3	AE	Yes
21 September 1979	Harrier GR3 ×2	AE	[3]No
4 October 1979	Harrier GR3	NOM	Yes
8 November 1979	Harrier GR3	NOM	No
12 March 1980	Harrier GR3	NOM	Yes
14 October 1980	Harrier GR3	TF	No
28 October 1980	Harrier GR3	NOM	Yes
1 December 1980	Sea Harrier FRS1	AE	No
26 May 1981	Harrier GR3	AE	No
14 July 1981	Harrier GR3	NPD	Yes
25 August 1981	Harrier GR3	SE	Yes
12 February 1982	Harrier GR3	NPD	Yes
6 May 1982	Sea Harrier FRS1	NOM	No
6 May 1982	Sea Harrier FRS1	NOM	No
23 May 1982	Sea Harrier FRS1	NPD	No
29 May 1982	Sea Harrier FRS1	NOM	No
8 June 1982	Harrier GR3	NPD	No
29 June 1982	Harrier T4	AE	No
6 November 1982	Harrier GR3	TF	No
21 January 1983	Sea Harrier FRS1	AE	No
23 February 1983	Harrier T4 and GR3	AE	[4]No
22 March 1983	Harrier GR3	NPD	No
3 May 1983	Harrier GR3	SE	No
14 June 1983	Sea Harrier FRS1	NPD	No
20 October 1983	Sea Harrier FRS1	TF	No

Date	Type	[1]Cause	[2]Low flying
28 October 1983	Harrier GR3	NPD	No
19 November 1983	Harrier GR3	NPD	No
16 March 1984	Sea Harrier FRS1	TF	No
3 June 1984	Harrier GR3	TF	No
29 November 1984	Harrier GR3	NOM	Yes
1 December 1984	Sea Harrier FRS1	NOM	Yes
7 February 1985	Sea Harrier T4	AE	No
18 February 1985	Harrier T4	NOM	[5]Yes
19 November 1985	Harrier GR3	NOM	No
16 April 1986	Sea Harrier FRS1	AE	No
17 June 1986	Harrier GR3	TF	No
28 June 1986	Harrier GR3	AE	No
15 October 1987	Sea Harrier FRS1	NOM	Yes
2 November 1987	Harrier GR3 ×2	AE	[6]No
20 May 1988	Harrier GR3	AE	No
18 August 1988	Harrier GR3	NPD	No
20 June 1989	Harrier T4	AE	No
4 October 1989	Sea Harrier FRS1	AE	No
29 October 1989	Sea Harrier FRS1	SE	No
1 December 1989	Sea Harrier FRS1	TF	No
8 May 1990	Sea Harrier FRS1	AE	No
17 October 1990	Harrier GR5	SE	No
10 May 1991	Sea Harrier FRS1	NPD	Yes
29 May 1991	Harrier GR7	TF	No
25 September 1991	Harrier T4	NOM	Yes
30 September 1991	Harrier GR5	AE	No
14 May 1992	Harrier GR3	NOM	No
28 May 1992	Sea Harrier FRS1	NPD	No
7 August 1992	Harrier GR5	TF	No
28 June 1993	Harrier GR7	NYD	Yes

[1] AE — Air crew error.
SE — Servicing error.
NOM — Natural, operating and medical hazards.
TF — Technical failure.
NPD — Not positively determined.
NYD — Not yet determined (board of inquiry not yet complete).
[2] Low flying column: Indicates whether the aircraft was engaged in low-flying training or not, it does not include accidents during take-off or landing or during low-level aerobatics displays.
[3] Mid-air collision involving two Harrier GR3s.
[4] Mid-air collision involving Harrier T4 and Harrier GR3.
[5] Mid-air collision involving Harrier GR3 and German Federal Marine F104 aircraft.
[6] Mid-air collision involving two Harrier GR3s.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the accident to a Harrier GR7 aircraft on 28 June.

Mr. Hanley: The report of the RAF board of inquiry into this accident is not yet complete. A summary of the board's findings will be published in due course.

Flag and Cope Thunder Exercises

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the dates and number and type of aircraft involved of all RAF participation in Flag and Cope Thunder Exercises in North America since 1989.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested is as follows:

Dates	Aircraft Types
Red/Green Flag	
April 1989	9 Tornado GR1s
April 1990	9 Tornado GR1s
April 1991	10 Harriers
January-February 1992	8 Tornado GR1s
October-November 1992	8 Tornado GR1s, 6 Tornado F3s, 2 Victors, 1 C-130
Cope Thunder/Distant Frontier	
April-May 1990	4 Tornado GR1s
April-May 1992	8 Tornado GR1s, 6 Tornado F3s, 1E-3D, 1 VC10 Tanker, 1 C-130
April-May 1993	9 Tornado GR1s, 8 Tornado F3, 1 C-120

Maple Flag
Records of RAF participation in Maple Flag exercises in Canada are not held centrally. The exercise takes place in May-June each year, and RAF participation usually comprises either eight Jaguars or Harriers, which usually attend in alternate years.

MiG Aircraft Collision

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what powers he has to conduct an investigation into the accident involving two MiG-29 aircraft at RAF Fairford on 25 July.

Mr. Hanley: The accident involving two MiG-29 aircraft at RAF Fairford occurred on 24 July 1993 during the international air tattoo (IAT). An RAF board of inquiry was convened because the accident occurred on MoD property, at a flying display which was being conducted under military flying regulations. The investigation was held with the agreement of both the IAT management and the Russian authorities.

Departmental Land

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many acres of land are owned by his Department in the United Kingdom; and what is their estimated capital value.

Mr. Hanley: The size of the defence estate in the United Kingdom is approximately 600,000 acres of freehold and leasehold land. It has never been subject to formal valuation.

Departmental Property

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many houses are owned by his Department; what is their capital value; and how many are vacant.

Mr. Hanley: As at 30 September 1993 the Ministry of Defence owned 72,178 service married quarters, of which 10,124 were vacant, and 677 civilian houses, of which 134 were vacant. The majority of the vacant properties were either undergoing or awaiting major maintenance work and modernisation, held for future deployments, awaiting units returning from overseas, already allotted to service families or under consideration for disposal. In addition 1,843 married quarters—1,150 of them vacant—and 512 civilian houses—61 of them vacant—were in the process of being sold. The overall capital value of the MOD's housing stock has not been assessed.

Civil Servants—Service Personnel Ratio

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the ratio of civil servants in his Department to service men and women *(a)* five years ago and *(b)* at the latest date for which the information is available.

Mr. Hanley: As at 1 April 1988 there were 317,000 United Kingdom regular forces and 143,000 full-time equivalent United Kingdom-based MOD civil servants of which 33,600 were in the administration group, the remainder being specialist non-industrial staff and industrial staff. At 1 September 1993 the total were 267,200 United Kingdom regular forces and 128,000 full-time equivalent United Kingdom-based MOD civil servants of whom 33,000 were in the administration group.

These give ratios of administration group MOD United Kingdom-based civil servants to United Kingdom regular forces of 1:9·43 at 1 April 1988 and 1:8·1 at 1 September 1993.

Digitised Charts

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statment on the preparation, investment and achievement in the hydrographics department's production of digitised charts; and what assessment has been made of the extent to which this work will enable the United Kingdom to compete succesfully in the world market for such charts.

Mr. Hanley: Responsibility for the subject in question is a matter for the Hydrographic Office Defence Support Agency under its chief executive, Rear Admiral J. A. L. Myres. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from J. A. L. Myres to Mr. David Nicholson, dated 29 October 1993:

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION—0820G

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Defence if he would make a statement on the preparation, investment and achievement in the Hydrographic Department's production of digitised charts, and what assessment has been made of the extent to which this work will enable the United Kingdom to compete successfully in the world markets for such charts.

The Minister has asked me, as Chief Executive of the Hydrographic Office, to reply directly to you.

Vessels are required under international law to carry charts when at sea. It has been recognised for some time that the use of digital versions of the current paper charts in conjunction with ECDIS (Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems) has the potential to increase significantly the safety of navigation and the protection of the marine and littoral environment, and also to reduce vessels' running costs. However, to translate this concept into reality, it was recognised that it was first necessary to reach international agreement on a wide range of associated technical, organisational, financial and legal aspects. I am pleased to say the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (HO) has played, and continues to play, a major role in these international discussions and in the formulation of the resulting standards for the exchange of digital data which were formally endorsed and promulgated by the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) at its 1992 Conference.

At the same time, the HO's fully-costed and formally-endorsed 10 year information System Strategy aims both to maximise the use of digital data and digital techniques in order to increase the efficiency of its operation, and to meet existing and future requirements to supply digital as well as paper charts to our customers. I am glad to say that the implementation of this strategy is proceeding to timetable.

Conscious of the requirements and needs of the emerging market for digital data and products, I can also detail two initiatives which the HO is actively pursuing. The first of these is the Admiralty Raster Chart Service (ARCS) in which we are collaborating with two British private sector companies. The enclosed press release provides details of the service which will be demonstrated for the first time in public next month at the Europort Exhibition. The second is the United Kingdom Coastal Zone Mapping Project (CZMP) which we are developing in collaboration with our sister Agency, Ordnance Survey. I am sure you will recall my invitation to you to attend a technical symposium in Westminster on 9 March 1993 at which we introduced the project to potential customers and sought their comments; sadly you were unable to attend. The CZMP seeks to provide the digital geographic template to allow the more effective management of the many aspects of the coastal zone, in line with the recommendations of the House of Commons Select Committee Report on the Environment (Coastal Zone Protection and Planning) under the chairmanship of Sir Hugh Rossi.

The intention is, and I firmly believe the reality will be, that the HO's pre-eminent position in supplying paper charts to the international maritime community will be successfully carried forward into the digital era.

Public Record Office

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for how long access to his Department's archives in the Public Record Office in Hayes has been blocked because of contamination of records by asbestos dust; what action is being taken to remedy the situation; and when applications for disability pensions and other matters will be able to be progressed.

Mr. Hanley: Following discovery of asbestos contamination the archive at Hayes has been closed to normal working since 24 June 1993, although restricted access for urgent matters has been maintained through the use of contractors or archive staff wearing protective clothing.

Responsibility for decontamination lies with Property Holdings of the Department of the Environment. Work has commenced on the removal of asbestos lagging and sealing the asbestos-sheet roofs, while tenders have been sought for cleaning the archive and all the records.

Priority will be given to that part of the archive containing service records and we are hopeful that unrestricted access will be possible from about mid-December.

United States Bases

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many United States military bases have been closed in the United Kingdom in each of that past five years; and if he will list them.

Mr. Hanley: The bases and facilities made available to the United States visiting forces and which have been returned to Ministry of Defence control in each of the past five years are as follows:

Base	*Facilities*	*Date*
1988:		
Bramley	Storage/Support	January 1988
1989:		
RAF Ridgewell	Storage/Support	August 1989
1990:		
RAF Wethersfield	Standby Deployment Base	October 1990
1991:		
RAF Chessington	Contingency Hospital	September 1991

Base	Facilities	Date
RAF Hullavington	Storage/Support	September 1991
RAF Kirknewton	Contingency Hospital	September 1991
RAF Lanark	Contingency Hospital	September 1991
1992:		
Aberdeen	Communications Site	November 1992
NAD Broughton Moor	NATO Armaments Depot	June 1992
RAF Cairnmore Hilloch	Communications Site	October 1992
Great Bromley	Communications Site	May 1992
Greatworth	Communication Site	February 1992
RAF Greenham Common	Standby Deployment Base	September 1992
Holy Loch	Storage/Support	June 1992
RAF Inverbervie	Communications Site	October 1992
RAF Kemble	Storage/Support	June 1992
RAF Locking	Contingency Hospital	October 1992
Martlesham Heath	Communications Site	July 1992
RAF Sculthorpe	Standby Deployment Base	October 1992
West Murkle	Communications Site	October 1992
1993:		
RAF Bentwaters	Main Operating Base	September 1993
RAF Burtonwood	Storage/Support	August 1993
Forss	Communications Site	September 1993
Framlingham	Storage/Support	September 1993
NAD Glen Douglas	NATO Armaments Depot	October 1993
RAF Kinnaber	Communications Site	January 1993
RAF Macrihanish	Storage/Support	April 1993
Mormond Hill	Communications Site	January 1993
RAF Woodbridge	Main Operating Base	August 1993

Redundancies

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much money has been paid in redundancy payments to members of the British armed forces in each of the last three years.

Mr. Hanley: The current redundancy programme began in financial year 1992-93. In that year a total of some £97,000,000 was spent on special capital payments. In the current year it is estimated that some £281,000,000 will be spent. In addition personnel who have served for 12 years or more are eligible for an immediate pension and terminal grant—for those with less than 12 years service these are preserved until age of 60. These payments would be made whether the individual left on redundancy or at the end of their agreed service. Expenditure on pension, terminal grants and commutation of pension was some £135,000,000 in 1992-93 and is estimated to be £247,000,000 for 1993-94.

Civil Servants (Retirements)

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what conditions will be placed on early retirees to prevent their subsequent re-employment as civil servants or consultants by their previous departments.

Mr. Aitken: Early retirees may be re-engaged to carry out essential work which cannot otherwise be continued or completed. They may also be taken on as consultants to undertake work for which no expertise exists, or can be made available, from within the Department. There are no proposals to impose conditions to prevent such employment.

Business Development Advisers

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list all the business development advisers appointed by his Department since 1979 giving details of the periods of their appointment.

Mr. Hanley: Since 1979 many different areas of the Ministry of Defence have appointed, or otherwise sought the views of, external consultants to advise on aspects of their business; and such appointments have been for widely varying periods of time. Full information on such appointments is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Officers' Housing

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the justification for his Department's proposal to build a house for a brigadier on green belt land off School lane, Pirbright, and 11 officers' married quarters, also on green belt land, west of Caterham close, Pirbright.

Mr. Hanley: The possible reroling of Queen Elizabeth barracks Pirbright is at present being considered. A review of married quarter holdings identified a possible shortfall of 11 officer quarters and one type 2 quarter. As a preliminary measure the local planning officer's views were sought and an application was submitted regarding the suitability of using MOD land for the construction of quarters should the need arise. The planning application has now been withdrawn. Possible further uses for the barracks continue to be examined but at this stage no conclusions have been reached.

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of the officers' married quarters in Caterham close and Dawneys road, Pirbright are currently occupied by personnel who are not employed at Pirbright camp.

Mr. Hanley: Six of the quarters are occupied by personnel not employed at Pirbright camp. They are entitled to occupy these quarters because Pirbright is used as a dormitory area for headquarters London district.

IMS Ltd.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the size of the staff and the net cash assets or liabilities of IMS Ltd. when it was wound up; and to where those staff and assets or liabilities were transferred.

Mr. Aitken: International Military Services (IMS) is a private limited company. It ceased trading in July 1991 and is in the process of being run down with the aim of going into liquidation once its obligations have been met. Information relating to the trading operations of the company is commercially confidential. The company publishes its accounts for public scrutiny in accordance with company law.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library tables showing the size and geographical location of *(a)* IMS Ltd. and *(b)* the defence export sales organisation.

Mr. Aitken: Yes.

Export Sales Agreements

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether advice or assistance has been offered to the Malaysian Government on the construction of air and naval base facilities in that country since 1984.

Mr. Aitken: Yes.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the products exported to, and projects commenced in, Brunei under the United Kingdom-Brunei defence export sales agreement since 1984; and which were the lead British enterprises involved in each case.

Mr. Aitken: In 1989 a defence protocol agreement was signed between the Governments of the United Kingdom and Brunei. To date, there have been no purchases by Brunei as a result of this agreement.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the products exported to, and projects commenced in, Malaysia under the United Kingdom-Malaysia defence export sales agreement since 1984; and which were the lead British enterprises involved in each case.

Mr. Aitken: A memorandum of understanding was not signed until September 1988. Under the terms of this MOU the Malaysian Government agreed to purchase various military equipments from the United Kingdom. The terms of the MOU cannot be released for reasons of commercial confidentiality, but since its signature contracts have been signed with a total value in excess of £1 billion.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the products exported to, and projects commenced in, Saudi Arabia under the Al Yamamah agreements; and which were the lead British enterprises involved in each case.

Mr. Aitken: The Al-Yamamah programme has included the provision to Saudi Arabia of Tornado aircraft, Hawk and PC-9 training aircraft, minehunters and major defence construction projects, together with associated equipment, infrastructure and extensive manpower and logistic support. An agreement for the supply of further Tornado aircraft was concluded this year. This is a Government-to-Government programme under which British Aerospace acts as prime contractor to the Ministry of Defence.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the products exported to, and projects commenced in, Jordan under the United Kingdom-Jordan defence export sales agreement with, in each case, the lead British enterprise involved, since 1984.

Mr. Aitken: It is not our practice to comment on detailed matters concerning individual defence exports. However, in this case the information concerned has been released to the Scott inquiry. Exceptionally, therefore, I can provide the information the hon. Gentleman requests, which is as follows:

Project	*Lead British enterprise*
1. 120mm and 105 ammunition	Royal Ordnance
2. Mod Kit for APFSDS	IMS
3. MBT spares	VDS
4. MBT spares	Royal Ordnance
5. MBT spares	David Brown vehicle transmissions
6. Training Simulator	Invertron Sim Systems
7. Mine Plough. Dozer Blede	Pearson Engineering
8. Giant Viper and Trailers	Royal Ordnance
9. Trackway 30 and 60	Laird (Anglesey)
10. Trackway 60	Laird (Anglesey)
11. Trackway Vehicles	Leyland
12. Medium Girder Bridge	Fairey Engineering
13. C/Mine Flail vehicle	Aardvark
14. Water Purification Eqpt	Stella-Meta Filters
15. Medical Equipment	IMS
16. Land Rover Vehicles	Land Rover
17. Land Rover/Fighting Veh	Land Rover
18. Land Rover Vehicle	Glover Webb
19. Armoured Land Rover	Shorts
20. MRA 7 Tellurometer	Tellumat
21. Laser Range Finder LP6	USI
22. Motorcycle	Armstrong Motorcycles
23. Director Artillery	Hall and Watts
24. Rapid Runway Repair Eqpt	IMS
25. Generators	Mirrless Blackstone
26. VHF Advanced Radios	Marconi Secure Radio
27. EOD Equipment	IMS
28. Fire Protection Eqpt	Graviner
29. LAW 80	Hunting Engineering
30. Radar	Marconi Radar
31. Radars	Marconi Radar
32. Cranes	Grove Coles
33. Workshop Eqpt	Air-tec
34. Workshop Eqpt	Kennedy Int.
35. FS Avionics update	Smiths Industries
36. EW Eqpt (Gnd/Air)	Racal
37. Cables	BICC
38. Cables/Transmission Eqpt	STC
39. Hawkeye Spares	Hawkeye Systems
40. Hawkeye Support Eqpt	Hawkeye Systems
41. Camouflage Nets	Bridport Aviation
42. Camouflage Nets	Bridport Aviation
43. Thermal Imager units	Thorn EMI
44. Communications Eqpt	IMS
45. HF/Misc Comms Eqpt	Marconi Comms
46. Laser Training Eqpt	Centronic
47. Engineering Eqpt	IMS
48. Air Cargo Loader	Avialift Products
49. Additional L/Rovers	Land Rover
50. Tank Transporters	Foden Trucks
51. Retreading Facility	Avon Tyres
52. Additional L/Rovers	Land Rover
53. A/C Combat Simulator	British Aerospace
54. Fast Patrol Boats (30m)	Vosper Thornycroft
55. Fast Patrol Boats (13m)	RTK Marine
56. 20 and 30mm Ammunition	BMARC
57. Oversight Services	MOD UK
58. Engineering Consultancy	Rendel, Palmer + Tritton
59. 17A2 GPMG	IMS
60. Target Drones	TTL

A small proportion of the equipment contracted for under these arrangements has not been delivered.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the date of the settlement of the defence exports sales agreements with Jordan, Malaysia, Brunei and the Al Yamamah agreement with Saudi Arabia since 1984; which was the British agency responsible for administering these agreements; and what was the value of the total order placed for each agreement in both current and standard prices.

Mr. Aitken: Two memoranda of understanding covering the sale of defence equipment with Jordan have been agreed, the first on 19 September 1985 and the second

on 9 June 1987. Administration of the contracts placed under these arrangements was provided by International Military Services.

The former Prime Minister and the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir, signed a memorandum of understanding in September 1988, and a defence protocol was signed between the Governments of the United Kingdom and Brunei in 1989. The original formal understanding and the memorandum of understanding between Her Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government concerning Project Al Yamamah were concluded, respectively, in 1985 and 1986. A further formal understanding was concluded in 1988. All these agreements are administered by the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence.

The exact value of orders placed under such agreements is confidential to the Government concerned.

Eurofighter

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what problems are being experienced with the installation of flight control systems in the Eurofighter by Deutsche Aerospace; what delays to the project have resulted; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Fife, North-East (Mr. Campbell) on 1 November at column *67*.

Pathfinder Initiative

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the successful and unsuccessful bids submitted to him under the Pathfinder initiative; and what was the cash value of each successful bid.

Mr. Aitken: This is a matter delegated to the Defence Research Agency under its framework document. I have therefore asked the chief executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Letter from Mr. J. Chisholm to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 3 November 1993:

In today's written answer the Minister of State for Defence Procurement informed you that I would be replying to your question about Pathfinder.

The DRA received over 640 bids in response to its Pathfinder initiative. So far 43 proposals with a total value of over £15·4 million have been accepted. A further 133 proposals with a total value of £42·7 million have been accepted in principle and negotiations are continuing to determine how these can best be incorporated into the existing research programme.

For reasons of commercial confidentiality I am not able to provide a list of all the bids received or their values. I would, however, hope to be in a position to give further details of the successful bids—though not the values—once formal contracts have been negotiated and the permission of the individual companies obtained. Some of this information should be available by the time of the second Pathfinder Conference which will be held at Farnborough on 24 and 25 November and I will write to you then with an update.

British Aerospace

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with British Aerospace on the national security implications of any proposals to out-source information technology being put forward by that company.

Mr. Aitken: My officials have had discussions with representatives of British Aerospace and have agreed that out-sourcing of their information technology work may be possible provided that certain well-defined security conditions are complied with.

Ferranti

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what competitive considerations for defence procurement there are in the proposed takeover of Ferranti by GEC; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: My Department is examining the competition implications of the proposed acquisition by GEC of Ferranti International and will, if necessary, advise the regulatory authorities in the usual manner. Advice of this nature is confidential.

GEC Marconi

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contracts he has placed with GEC Marconi since 15 July; and what is their value.

Mr. Aitken: Our latest centrally held records show that GEC Marconi Ltd. was awarded 72 MOD contracts with a total value of approximately £6·57 million in the period 15 July 1993 to 30 September 1993.

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the efforts being made and planned by his Department to develop computer simulation programmes and other methods of testing nuclear weapons not involving underground detonations of a nuclear device.

Mr. Aitken: I refer the hon. Member to my answer on 2 November 1992 at column *53*.

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the military role of British sub-strategic nuclear weapons.

Mr. Hanley: I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence during the debate on the Statement on the Defence Estimates on 18 October 1993, *Official Report*, col. 34.

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the contribution made to the military doctrine of NATO by British sub-strategic nuclear weapons.

Mr. Hanley: The contribution of British nuclear weapons to the overall deterrence and security of the allies is recognised in the alliance's strategic concept, a copy of which is in the Library of the House. A significant proportion of the sub-strategic weapons assigned to the alliance are British.

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department designates a nuclear weapon as sub-strategic on the basis of *(a)* range, *(b)* yield or *(c)* the military role allocated to the weapon.

Mr. Hanley: The designation "sub-strategic" relates to the type of action to which the weapon would contribute.

Anglo-French Nuclear Co-operation Council

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether it is intended that the Government of the United States will participate in the Anglo-French Nuclear Co-operation Council; and what discussions he has had with the United States Government on this matter;

(2) if he will make a statement on the function and organisation of the Anglo-French Nuclear Co-operation Council; and if he will place the documents relating to the establishment of this council in the Library;

(3) what matters will be discussed in the Anglo-French Nuclear Co-operation Council;

(4) if the documents relating to the business of the Anglo-French Nuclear Co-operation Council will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Hanley: The Franco-British Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy and Doctrine was set up in autumn 1992. It brings together senior officials from the British and French Foreign and Defence Ministries, reporting as necessary to Ministers. The commission has carried out a comparison of the two countries' approaches to the role of deterrence, nuclear doctrines and concepts, anti-missile defences, arms control and non-proliferation. Further joint work on these subjects is in hand. The focus of the commission's work has been to deepen the dialogue on nuclear policy issues between the United Kingdom and France rather than to arrive at agreed Franco-British public positions on those issues. It has not so far produced papers appropriate for placing in the Library of the House. There are no plans for the United States to participate in these bilateral discussions: we have similar discussions with the United States both bilaterally and within NATO.

NATO Nuclear Planning Group

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the remit of NATO's nuclear planning group includes discussion of nuclear arms control and nuclear non-proliferation issues.

Mr. Hanley: Issues relating to nuclear arms control and non-proliferation are discussed at nuclear planning group meetings to the extent that they affect the responsibilities of NATO Defence Ministers.

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's view of the purpose and remit of NATO's nuclear planning group.

Mr. Hanley: The purpose of the nuclear planning group is to enable alliance Defence Ministers to discuss matters relating to NATO's nuclear posture, including questions of policy, doctrine, plans and procedures.

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if NATO will consider extending the membership of the nuclear planning group to include non-treaty members of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council.

Mr. Hanley: We do not consider that it would be appropriate for co-operation partners to participate in the work of the nuclear planning group.

WE177 Free-fall Bomb

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's programme to extend the service life of the WE177 free-fall bomb.

Mr. Hanley: We currently assess that the WE177 carried by the Tornado aircraft will be able to provide an effective capability into the first decade of the next century.

Ammunition

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 28 October, *Official Report*, column *729*, what proportion of ammunition and propellants supplied to the armed services has been placed indirectly with foreign companies.

Mr. Aitken: This is a matter for the prime contractors concerned.

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 28 October, *Official Report*, column *728*, in what country the non-EC supplier of ammunition or propellants is incorporated.

Mr. Aitken: Austria.

Submarine Accidents

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the maximum area and radius which would have to be *(a)* evacuated and *(b)* subjected to restrictions in the worst case scenario of a severely ruptured submarine reactor due to collision or other circumstances in the firth of Forth or the firth of Clyde; and what contingency plans have been made.

Mr. Hanley *[pursuant to his answer, 29 October 1993, c. 802-3]:* The answer that I gave the hon. Member on 29 October should have read as follows:

The overall probability of any accident resulting in even a small release is very low indeed. Nevertheless it remains prudent to develop contingency plans to respond to the possibility of an accident which might result in a radioactive hazard. The risk of an accident which would require the application of public protection measures such as shelter, evacuation or taking potassium iodate tablets beyond a distance of 10 km from any accident location is no more likely than about one in one million in any one year, even assuming a reactor is operating continuously at that particular location.

No. 15 (Reserve) Squadron

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the impact of the move of No. 15 (Reserve) Squadron RAF to Lossiemouth on the frequency of use of the weapons ranges at *(a)* Tain, *(b)* Rosehearty and *(c)* Cape Wrath.

Mr. Hanley: The use of the ranges at RAF Tain and RAF Rosehearty has decreased during the last 12 months following the progressive withdrawal from the United Kingdom of USAF F-111 aircraft and the run-down of the Buccaneers at RAF Lossiemouth. The move of No. 15 (Reserve) Squadron to RAF Lossiemouth is expected to increase usage from current levels in such a way as to be approximately in line with that which applied at 1992. The use of the Cape Wrath range is not expected to be affected by the move of No. 15 (Reserve) Squadron.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 4 November 1993

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Scott Inquiry

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is his policy, when considering publicly releasing documents submitted to the Scott inquiry by officials or former Ministers of his Department, on consulting Lord Justice Scott.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: It is the policy of this Department that all relevant papers from FCO files are submitted to Lord Justice Scott on request from the inquiry. The Department has also volunteered additional relevant papers.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the level of fighting in and around Sarajevo during the past month; how many breaches of the ceasefire there have been during that period; and if he will list the identities of parties who initiated the breach of ceasefire on each occasion where such information is available.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The level of fighting in Sarajevo continues to fluctuate. Both the Bosnian Government forces and the Bosnian Serbs have initiated attacks. There are no precise details on the numbers of ceasefire breaches and which party was responsible for them.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what attempts have been made by the United Nations to maintain or repair the electricity supply installations around Sarajevo during the past fortnight; what was the result; what representations have been made about hindrance to the work; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The United Nations protection force and the parties to the conflict are in constant touch about repairing utilities in Sarajevo. UNPROFOR engineers work hard to repair and maintain utilities, including electricity, when local conditions permit and the warring parties allow safe access.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment is made on a daily or weekly basis of the level of fighting throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina; which areas are currently under the most intense conflict; which areas have been under the most intense conflict during the past month; which of the ethnic communities are principally involved in military clashes; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We receive regular reports of the situation on the ground in Bosnia from a number of sources, including the United Nations, British UNPROFOR troops and the European Community monitor mission. The conflict remains widespread in many areas in Bosnia. The most intense fighting in recent months has taken place in central Bosnia between Bosnian Government forces and the Bosnian Croats. We also remain particularly concerned about continued fighting between the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serbs around Sarajevo and the Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what actions are required from *(a)* the Belgrade Government to ensure removal, or part removal, of United Nations and European Community sanctions and *(b)* the Croatian Government to avoid the implementation of either United Nations or European Community sanctions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: United Nations Security Council resolution 820 envisages a review of sanctions after the Bosnian parties have reached a peace settlement and the Bosnian Serbs are judged to be co-operating in good faith with its implementation. EC Foreign Ministers also declared on 5 April that there could be gradual lifting of sanctions if the Bosnian Serbs met these conditions. Croatia remains on notice that it faces the threat of withdrawal of preferential EC trading benefits unless it co-operates with international efforts to resolve the conflicts in Bosnia and Croatia and uses its influence with the Bosnian Croats to ensure that they also co-operate.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans have been made for a new round of peace talks in London concerning the current conflict in the fomer Yugoslavia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the possibility of another international conference in separate meetings with Dr. Boutros Ghali and Mr. Stoltenberg on 25 October. There was agreement that a conference, probably in Geneva, may be useful in guiding the parties towards a settlement once significant further progress has been made, but that it would be premature to hold such a conference now.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what were the circumstances surrounding the attack on United Nations aid personnel near Novi Travnik on 25 October; what were the circumstances of the attack; and what casualties were sustained.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Three convoys, two carrying United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees aid and one resupplying UNPROFOR, came under fire south of Novi Travnik while negotiating passage through an HVO checkpoint. One Danish UNHCR employee was killed and eight United Nations aid personnel were wounded. The United Nations is investigating the circumstances and its report will be available soon. In the meantime, the UNHCR has suspended convoys in central Bosnia.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions of the situation in the former Yugoslavia he had with the Secretary-General of the United Nations during their recent meeting; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary- General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Ghali, discussed a wide range of issues covering the peace prospects in Bosnia, plans to hold a further international conference, sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro and the humanitarian situation in former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish the guidelines issued to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees airlift operations cell Geneva to cover the humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The policy guidelines for movement into and out of Sarajevo by air are issued by UNHCR headquarters in Geneva. I have arranged for the hon. Member to receive a copy of the latest guidelines issued by UNHCR on 12 September.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what consultations he had with the authorities in Sarajevo before formulating the guidelines issued to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees airlift operations cell Geneva to cover the humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The guidelines are formulated by UNHCR (Air Operations Cell) in consultation with UNPROFOR.

Belgrade (Ambassador)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what date is envisaged for the return of the British ambassador to his post in Belgrade; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: There are no plans at present to reappoint an ambassador to Belgrade.

Montenegro

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement following his meeting with the Montenegrin Foreign Minister, Mr. Lekic.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: When my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I separately met the Montenegrin Foreign Minister on 25 October he assured us that his Government were trying to promote internal democracy and support efforts to reach a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in former Yugoslavia. Mr. Lekic also asked for a limited exemption from sanctions to help relieve a shortage of humanitarian supplies in Montenegro for refugees and the needy local population. We made it clear that the sanctions regime had to be rigorously enforced. We would, however, continue to support the delivery of humanitarian aid throughout former Yugoslavia, including Montenegro, whose humanitarian problems we recognised, on the basis of need.

Armenia

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what conclusions he has drawn from his recent visit to the Transcaucasus about the prospect of the economic blockade of Armenia being lifted.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: During my visit to the Transcaucasus I concluded that the humanitarian suffering caused by the conflicts in the region was growing worse. This points to the urgent need to resolve all disputes by negotiation.

The blockade of Armenia is contributing to the hardship. We want to see it lifted just as we want to see the Armenian blockade of Nakichevan lifted. Both steps are essential if lasting peace is to be secured.

EC Directives

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 27 October, *Official Report*, column *663*, if he will set out the considerations underlying the decision not to publish a list of EC directives that the Government believe should be amended or repealed as a result of the application of subsidiarity.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: In discussions with the Commission and other member states over recent months about putting the principle of subsidiarity into effect, we have put forward a number of suggestions of directives, in force or proposed, which we believe should be amended, repealed or withdrawn on subsidiarity grounds. We shall continue to develop our ideas. It would be misleading to publish a list which implied that we had reached the limit of suggestions which we have to contribute, nor would this help to achieve our negotiating objectives. Ministers regularly make clear to the House their views on particular directives and proposals.

Council of Ministers

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish a statement of forthcoming business in the European Community's Council of Ministers, 1993-94.

Mr. Heathcoat Amory: The following meetings are planned:

5 November: Culture Council
8 November: Education Council
8-9 November: Foreign Affairs Council
11 November: Internal Market Council
15 November: Budget Council
16-17 November: Agriculture Council
18 November: Industry Council
19 November: Consumer Council
22 November: ECOFIN Council
22 November: Fisheries Council
23 November: Social Affairs Council
29-30 November: Transport Council
29-30 November: Justice Council

The following subjects are likely to be discussed:

(a) Culture Council—5 November

European City of Culture
The economic aspects of culture and its role in creating employment
Fixed book price and status of the artist: report by presidency on the informal meeting of Ministers
Centenary of the cinema
Evaluation of the media programme
Information from the presidency on the Mons seminar of audio-visual Ministers followed by an exchange of views on the audio-visual sector and the GATT negotiations

(b) Education Council/Meeting of Education Ministers—8 November

Student mobility and access to higher education in the Community (9324/93)
Green Paper on European dimension in education (COM(93)457 Final)

(c) Foreign Affairs Council—8-9 November
Follow-up to 29 October European Council
Access to information
EP committees of inquiry
Access negotiations: preparation of ministerial negotiating sessions
Relations with Turkey: agreement on Community position for association council
Stability Pact
Ex-Yugoslavia
South Africa
Trade policy questions
Uruguay round
Trade policy instruments
Relations with Switzerland
Austria: state aid (possible)
Relation with Russia: revision of negotiating mandate for partnership agreement
Relation with Bulgaria: conclusion of interim agreement
Relations with Morocco: negotiating mandate
Relations with Israel: negotiating mandate (possible)

(d) Internal Market Council—11 November
Operation of the internal market (possible)
Data protection (possible)
Equipment for use in explosive atmospheres (possible)
Personal protective equipment (possible)
Motor cycle type approval directives (possible)
Trans-European networks: declarations of European interest (possible)
Directive 83/189 on technical standards and regulations (10898/92) (possible)
Resolution on small and medium-sized enterprises
European company statute (possible)

(e) Budget Council—15 November
1994 draft budget

(f) Agriculture Council—16-17 November
Agenda unavailable

(g) Industry Council—18 November
Steel Restructuring
Possible decision on article 95 ECSC steel state aid cases
ECSC funding
Competition policy: annual competition report Commission presentation
General follow-up to resolutions—aeronautics, automobiles, textiles and IT
SPRINT—strategic programme for innovation and technology transfer

(g) Consumer Council—19 November
Timeshare directive—possible common position
Distance selling directive—orientation debate
Commission consumer action plan
Amendment to directive 79/112/EEC on food labelling
Transparency of cross-frontier payments
Green Paper on access to justice (possible)
Green Paper on guarantees and after-sales service

(h) ECOFIN Council—22 November
Preparation of the Brussels European Council (possible)
EMU secondary legislation:
consideration of EP opinions
establishment of common positions on privileged access and monetary financing
Commission White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment
Broad guidelines of economic policy
Community participation in the European investment fund (4382/93 COM(93)3)
Relations with central and eastern Europe
BCCI directive (8365/93 COM(93)363)
UCITS (4901/93 COM(93)37)
7th VAT directive (possible)

(i) Fisheries Council—22 November
Agenda unavailable

(j) Labour and Social Affairs Council—23 November
Agenda unavailable

(k) Transport Council—29-30 November
Proposal for a "CARE" road safety data base
Council conclusions on the Commission's road safety communication
Transport to and from Greece
Presentation of proposals on railway licensing and access to the network (possible)
Relations with Switzerland
Road haulage external relations mandate (possible)
Inland waterways "Tour de Role" (possible)
Presentation of proposal on transport of dangerous goods (possible)
Air accidents investigation (plus possible follow-up to 27 September "Aviation Crisis" meeting)
Training for seafarers
Classification societies
Relations with west Africa

(l) Justice Council—29-30 November
Various immigration/asylum items
Extraction
Europol and other TREVI items
EC accession to ECHR

The *Cultural Affairs Council* will meet on 5 November. Discussions will be on the European City of Culture and the economic aspects of culture and its role in creating employment. There will be a report by the Presidency on the informal meeting of Ministers on fixed book price and status of the artist. Ministers will discuss the centenary of the cinema and carry out an evaluation of the media programme. There will be information from the presidency on the Mons seminar of audio-visual Ministers followed by an exchange of views on the audio-visual sector and the GATT negotiations.

The *Education Council* will meet on 8 November. There will be discussions and an exchange of views on student mobility and access to higher education in the Community, and on the Green Paper on the European dimension in education.

There will be a *Foreign Affairs Council* on 8 and 9 November. The Council will discuss a Commission paper on the development of trade relations in a number of sectors with Switzerland, following its decision not to participate in the European economic area. Subject to the progress of talks with Austria, the Council may be asked to approve Commission proposals for action against state aids granted by Austria to two industrial projects. The FAC will discuss the lifting of some of the remaining sanctions imposed by the EC on South Africa. The Council will also consider the policy to be adopted towards South Africa between now and the establishment of a democratic government there, including a contribution to monitoring of the first full elections there next year. The Council will consider further the proposed pact on stability in Europe, and proposals to amend the current negotiating directives of an EC/Russia partnership and co-operation agreement. The Council will discuss conclusion of the EC/Bulgaria interim agreement. The agreement is intended to give early effect to those provisions of the EC/Bulgaria association agreement—signed 8 March 1993—that fall within the sole competence of the Community.

The *Internal Market Council* will meet on 11 November. Discussions will be on TENS 'and the resolution on small and medium-sized enterprises. Also listed on the agenda for possible discussion is: operation of the internal market; data protection; equipment for use in

explosive atmospheres; personal protective equipment; technical standards and regulations and European company statute.

The *Budget Council* will meet on 15 November to consider the European Parliament's proposed amendments and modifications to the draft budget of the European Community for 1994.

The *Industry Council* will meet on 18 November. The Council will be dominated by a discussion of the Spanish, Italian and German applications for aid for their steel industries under article 95 ECSC. Commissioner van Miert will give his annual report on competition matters.

At the *Consumer Affairs Council* of 19 November, the Commission will give a presentation on its consumer action plan. It is possible that a common position on the timeshare directive will be reached at this Council. Issues to be discussed will be duration of cooling-off period, provisions for the protection of prohibition of deposit moneys, and provisions for purchasers to withdraw from timeshare contracts without penalty. Applicable law issues may also be discussed. As for the distance selling directive, it is not clear whether the original Council intention to have an orientation debate on policy issues arising from the latest text of the directive—submitted to Council on 13 October—will be carried over to 19 November. It may settle for a report on progress. The United Kingdom also wishes to discuss proposed ban on prepayment, and provision for cancellation of credit card transactions.

The *Economic and Finance Council* will meet on 22 November. It is expected to consider preparation for the Brussels European Council discussion on economic issues; the question of Community participation in the European investment fund; the directive to make changes to existing EC financial services legislation in response to the collapse of Bank of Credit and Commerce International and the Maxwell affair; the amending directive on the co-ordination of laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to undertakings for collective investment in transferable securities (UCITS); and possibly Community financial assistance to central and eastern Europe and former Soviet Union. The Council may also consider a report from the Commission on progress with economic convergence and implementation of the single market legislation.

The *Fisheries Council* will meet on 22 November. The agenda is not yet available.

The *Social Affairs Council* will meet on 23 November. The agenda is not yet available.

The *Transport Council* will meet on 19/30 November. Ministers will discuss the proposal for a "CARE" road safety data base and the Council conclusions on the Commission's road safety communication. Transport to and from Greece, relations with Switzerland, training for seafarers, classification societies and relations with west Africa will be discussed. There will possibly be a presentation of proposals on railway licensing and access to the network, and discussion on road haulage external relations mandate, inland waterways "Tour de Role" and air accidents investigation. There may also be a presentation of the proposal on transport of dangerous goods.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Brodsworth Hall

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list the items of value to date that English Heritage has removed from Brodsworth hall, Brodsworth, near Doncaster, south Yorkshire, and placed in secure storage prior to them being replaced after the hall's renovation.

Mr. Brooke: Approximately 17,000 objects of historic importance, valued at around £3·5 million, have been inventoried and are in store. Producing a list of this size for publication is impractical in the time available. However, I understand that English Heritage has invited the hon. Member to visit Brodsworth hall, and that it would be happy to extend its invitation to cover the store and the work in progress at both sites.

Libraries

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage how many public libraries of *(a)* more than 8,000 sq m, *(b)* between 2,000 and 8,000 sq m and *(c)* less than 2,000 sq m have been built in (i) the last three years, (ii) the last 10 years and (iii) the last 20 years.

Mr. Sproat: Information about new library openings is not collected centrally. Statistics collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy go back 20 years and include information on numbers of service points but do not include information on library size. The total number of mobile, central and branch libraries in England, open more than 10 hours a week, in 1991-92—the latest year for which figures are available—1982-83 and 1972-73 was 3,650, 3,598 and 3,486 respectively.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what plans Her Majesty's Government have to use public libraries to give the public access to *(a)* Government papers and *(b)* Government information.

Mr. Sproat: The responsibility for providing public library services, and for choosing their stock, rests with local library authorities. Official publications are clearly likely to be an important element of the comprehensive library and information service which library authorities must provide, and most of them stock an extensive range. Public libraries are also frequently used by Departments for disseminating official information.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage how many public libraries are open for 60 hours or more a week in *(a)* England and *(b)* London.

Mr. Sproat: The number of service points open for 60 hours or more a week in England and London at 31 March 1992—the latest date for which figures are available—was 14 and three respectively.

Access is maximised by a pattern of libraries which are open where and when people wish to use them, not simply by aggregate hours.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage in what ways the views and experiences of *(a)* library users and *(b)* librarians are being (i) represented and (ii) canvassed in his review of libraries.

Mr. Sproat: The terms of reference of the public library review were drawn up following wide consultation of

professional librarians. Further extensive consultation during the course of the review will include the views of librarians and of users and non-users of the library service. In undertaking the review, the Department will be advised by an expert group of librarian members of my statutory advisory council—the Library and Information Services Council (England).

Television Licence Fees

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will make a statement about the level of the television licence fees.

Mr. Brooke: Following a recommendation of the Peacock committee in 1986, the television licence fee was increased annually in line with retail prices index for the three years, April 1988 to April 1990. In 1990, independent consultants, Price Waterhouse, identified potential savings of £203 million which they believed could be achieved by the BBC over the five-year period, 1991 to 1996, without any reduction in service.

In the light of the consultants' report, the Government adopted a five-year licence fee strategy. This involved an increase of 3 per cent. below RPI in April 1991, followed by annual increases at RPI over the next four years, but with a commitment to reassess the position before the fee increase due in April 1994.

On 21 June this year, I announced the appointment of independent consultants, Touche Ross, to advise me on the BBC's progress in achieving the efficiency and revenue gains identified by Price Waterhouse in 1990; on the scope for further, additional savings; and, on whether the RPI linkage continued to be appropriate for the next three years.

Touche Ross reported to me at the end of August, and a management summary of its report is being published today by HMSO. A copy has been placed in the Library of the House. The full report will not be published because it contains material which is commercially sensitive to the BBC.

The good news for licence payers is that the consultants concluded that the BBC had done well to manage its financial position during a time of considerable change. The consultants found that the BBC has pursued opportunities to make savings and efficiency improvements in a rigorous and effective manner, and I congratulate the BBC on the progress it has made.

Touche Ross put forward a range of options for setting the level of the licence fee over the next three years, including setting the fee below RPI in two of the next three years. Its report welcomed the introduction of the "Producer Choice" initiative on 1 April this year, but noted the need for caution in setting the licence fee, because the full impact of the initiative on the BBC's costs was not yet known.

The Government have decided, in the light of the report, that for the next three years changes in the licence fee should continue to be set at the level of RPI changes. This will enable the BBC to channel savings into programmes and, over the next three years, allow the BBC steadily to reduce and largely eliminate its annual borrowing.

The licence payer will benefit directly from the additional and better programmes which this settlement will allow, and the BBC will benefit from being able to plan on a sound base before the expiry of the present royal charter at the end of 1996. We are considering how the BBC should be financed in the longer term, as part of our review of the corporation's future.

In recent years, the April licence fee increase has been based on the RPI figures published in the preceding September. This means that the television licence fee will rise by 1·8 per cent. from 1 April 1994. The colour licence will therefore increase from £83 to £84·50, and a black and white licence will now cost £28, a rise of 50p. The necessary regulations giving effect to the increase will be laid before the House in due course.

Transfrontier Television

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage when he intends to submit his report to the European Commission on the implementation of articles 4 and 5 of the European directive on transfrontier television; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Brooke: The report is being submitted today, and I am placing a copy in the House Libraries. It shows that the great majority of television programming seen in the United Kingdom is of European origin. In particular, the terrestrial channels have each broadcast around 70 per cent. European material and have met in full the requirement to broadcast a proportion of programming independently produced within the Community. These channels continue to account for over 90 per cent. of viewing as assessed by television ratings.

Many of the new satellite channels licensed in the United Kingdom have also reached the targets set in the directive both for European content and for independently produced material. This is very encouraging and vindicates our efforts to encourage diversity and choice in the United Kingdom broadcasting market.

The report also shows, however, that a number of other broadcasters have yet to meet the targets for European and independently produced material referred to in the directive. While it may not be practicable for all of these broadcasters to meet these levels, I am particularly disappointed by the performance of some broadcasters who have fallen well short. All broadcasters licensed in the United Kingdom are bound by the requirements of the directive. As a first step, we shall be writing to all the relevant broadcasters to ask why they have not met the requirements of the directive, what level of European and independently produced material it would be practicable for them to transmit, and over what period of time they could progressively achieve these levels.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Fishing Vessels

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many prosecutions have taken place in Wales since 1988 under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Acts in respect of vessels that fish for profit.

Mr. Jack: Since 1988, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's sea fisheries inspectorate has not undertaken any prosecutions in Wales under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Acts in respect of vessels fishing for profit while unregistered.

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many of his Department's fishery officers of the inspectorate of fisheries are responsible for enforcement work on licences around the coast of Wales.

Mr. Jack: The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's sea fisheries inspectorate currently has five officers based in Wales—two at Milford Haven and three at Caernarvon—whose responsibilities include licensing of the fishing vessels and related enforcement.

Cattle Diseases

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what increase there has been in incidents of *(a)* brucellosis and *(b)* warble fly infection in cattle since 1 January; to what extent these incidents have been caused by imported cattle; and if she will make a statement on the measures she is taking.

Mr. Soames: Brucella abortus has been isolated from cattle on one farm this year and serological evidence of infection found on a further nine farms up to the end of October. This is the first isolation of brucella abortus in Great Britain since 1990 but positive serological reactions, which may have been caused by cross reaction with another organism, were found on 12 farms in 1992. The origin of the last outbreak is still under investigation. Action is being taken to trace any animals which have been in contact with the infected cattle and to prevent the spread of infection.

Clinical cases of serological evidence of warble fly were recorded on 107 premises in Great Britain in 1993 compared with none in 1992. All the cases recorded in 1993 were directly linked to imported cattle. Seventy-one of the premises have been released from all controls following satisfactory treatment. The remaining 36 premises will be released from controls when compulsory autumn treatment has been completed. We have been in touch with the French authorities and have received assurances from them that they will not certify for export animals showing clinical signs of warble fly infestation. We are also seeking further safeguards from the Community to prevent the importation of cattle in which the infestation is not yet clinically evident and are reassessing the role of compulsory post-import treatment.

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what cattle diseases have reappeared in the United Kingdom since 1 January; how this has come about; and what action is being taken to prevent the importation of cattle diseases from other parts of the EC.

Mr. Soames: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 3 November to my hon. Friend the Member for Taunton (Mr. Nicholson).

Ewe Annual Premium

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many farmers in England are currently eligible for ewe annual premium payments; how many claims for payment have been received; how many have been paid; and when any outstanding claims will be paid.

Mr. Jack: I have no figures regarding the number of sheep farmers who are eligible to apply. some 42,700 claims have been received under the 1993 scheme and about 29,600 have been paid the first and second advances and less-favoured area supplement where appropriate. Outstanding eligible claims will be paid as soon as possible.

Prairie Dogs

Mr. Barry Field: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what are the current regulations on the control of prairie dogs; and what assessment she has made of whether they are adequate to contain their spread;

(2) what is the estimated United Kingdom population of prairie dogs living in the wild.

Mr. Soames: The Ministry is not aware of any populations of prairie dogs outside captivity within the United Kingdom, other than the small and undetermined numbers reported on the Isle of Wight. Those on the Isle of Wight are reported to be escapees from a wildlife park. It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, to release or allow prairie dogs into the wild. Prairie dogs which have escaped from zoos or similar establishments are not protected under wildlife legislation and can be controlled by landowners or occupiers using any method not prohibited by the 1981 Act. Shooting or cage trapping and humane dispatch are two methods that could be used.

Mr. Barry Field: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what advice she will give Isle of Wight farmers about controlling prairie dogs.

Mr. Soames: The Ministry has received no complaints of prairie dog damage from farmers or landowners on the Isle of Wight. Landowners and occupiers are free to use any legal method of control to deal with prairie dogs on their land. ADAS, the Ministry's wildlife advisers will, on request, give advice on the legal methods available and its services are being made available to the Medina borough council.

Mr. Barry Field: To ask the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what is the estimated annual cost of the damage caused by prairie dogs.

Mr. Soames: No reports of damage have been received by the Ministry and, therefore, no assessment can be made of the estimated annual cost of any such damage.

Mr. Barry Field: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what experience her Ministry has of controlling the spread of prairie dogs in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Soames: The Ministry has not been involved with the control of the spread of prairie dogs in this country as this is the responsibility of landowners and occupiers. Nevertheless, ADAS, the Ministry's wildlife advisers, has experience in dealing with a variety of animal species where these have posed problems to farmers and others and it will draw on this experience in offering any advice.

Organophosphorus Dips

Mr. Fry: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what recent site has had advice from the Veterinary Products Committee on the continued use of organophosphorus dips.

Mr. Soames: The Veterinary Products Committee provides independent scientific advice to the licensing authority—the United Kingdom Agriculture and Health Ministers—on matters concerning the licensing of veterinary medicinal products, including organophosphorus sheep dips. Such advice, however, is not given to individual sites at which veterinary medicines may be used.

Drift Nets

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food whether she intends to discuss the use of drift nets over 2·5 km long at the Council of European Community Fisheries Ministers on 22 November.

Mr. Jack: The agenda for the November Council of Fisheries Ministers has not yet been settled by the Belgian presidency and so at this stage we are not certain if the issue will be discussed. Currently, no proposal for an extension of the derogation has been received.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many breaches of the United Nations ban on drift nets over 2·5 km long there have been in *(a)* United Kingdom territorial waters and *(b)* international waters during the last 12 months.

Mr. Jack: We are not aware of any cases of United Kingdom vessels breaching the drift net rules in any water. We have no information on infringements by vessels from other countries, European or otherwise.

Waste Dumping at Sea

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer of 1 November, *Official Report,* column 42, what plans she has to publish further details of Her Majesty's Government's position in relation to issues to be considered at the London convention on 8 to 12 November in advance of the convention.

Mr. Jack: We have no plans to publish any further details in advance of this meeting.

Food Labelling

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what advice the Food Advisory Committee has given on the labelling of foods produced by genetically modified organisms.

Mr. Soames: The Food Advisory Committee has carefully considered possible criteria for the labelling of foods produced using genetically modified organisms—GM foods—and has consulted widely on the matter. It has also considered the report of the Committee on the Ethics of Genetic Modification and Food Use, chaired by the Reverend Dr. John Polkinghorne, which was published in September. It has now submitted its advice, a copy of which I am putting in the Library of the House.

The Food Advisory Committee takes the view that it would be unrealistic to label every food whose product has involved genetic modification. It has however accepted that there should be provision for choice in relation to those foods which raise real concerns for a significant proportion of the population. It has therefore proposed that a GM food should be labelled if it:

(a) contains a copy gene originally derived from a human;
(b) contains a copy gene originally derived from an animal which is the subject of religious dietary restrictions; or
(c) is a plant or microbial material and containing a copy gene originally derived from an animal.

These rules would not apply if the inserted copy gene had been destroyed by processing and was not, therefore, present in the food.

I am grateful to the committee for its careful and thorough examination of the issues. It is continuing its work, in particular in the form of labelling that might be used. Meanwhile, its advice coincides very closely with that of the Polkinghorne committee and I propose to accept it. The Government will therefore seek provisions on these lines in the proposed novel foods regulation which is currently under discussion in Brussels. Since very few GM foods have yet come on the market and public understanding of the technique is still limited, we shall also seek a provision for a review in a few years' time.

Cattle and Badgers

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she has taken advice on the scientific work under way on cattle tuberculosis and badgers in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

Mr. Soames: Yes. We organised a scientific seminar on 3 November when scientists from Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Repulic of Ireland were able to present a report on the current state of their work to both the Ministry and the consultative panel on badgers and bovine TB.

I was present at the meeting and found it extremely useful. I am sure that it will make an invaluable contribution to developing our future approach to this complex area. We will continue to keep a close eye on the results of this highly important work.

Wheat

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what is her estimate of the reduction in acreage and wheat tonnage equivalent output of each EC country between the 1991-92 and 1992-93 growing seasons; and what plans she has to prevent further disadvantage to the United Kingdom in both acreage and tonnage terms.

Mr. Jack: A table showing the area planted and tonnage produced for wheat (excluding durum wheat) in each member state during the growing seasons 1991-92 and 1992-93, together with the percentage difference is attached. The figures provided are based on the United Kingdom Agricultural Departments' first estimate of the 1993 United Kingdom cereals harvest and the most recent EC Commission forecasts for all other member states.

I shall continue to seek a fair deal for British cereal producers in the same way that achieved a defeat for the CAP reform proposals which would have resulted in 60 per cent. of our set-aside land being uncompensated compared to 34 per cent. in the rest of the Community. More recently, we negotiated an 18 per cent. non-rotational set-aside requirement for the United Kingdom compared to 20 per cent. in other member states.

EC wheat area and production—1991-92 and 1992-93 growing seasons

Country	Area (1,000 hectare) 1991-92	1992-93	Per cent. change	Production (1,000 tonnes) 1991-92	1992-93	Per cent. change
Belgium and Luxembourg	219	200	−8·7	1,442	1,300	−9·8
Denmark	581	610	+5·0	3,583	4,392	+22·6
Germany	2,582	2,390	−7·4	14,473	15,475	+6·9
Greece	332	307	−7·5	940	900	−4·3
Spain	1,669	1,469	−12·0	3,197	3,899	+22·0
France	4,698	4,397	−6·4	30,889	28,909	−6·4
Ireland	93	70	−24·7	650	500	−23·1
Italy	988	918	−7·1	4,632	4,117	−11·1
Netherlands	127	118	−7·1	1,020	920	−9·8
Portugal	301	265	−12·0	381	495	+29·9
United Kingdom	2,067	1,762	−14·8	14,100	12,900	−8·5
EC	13,657	12,506	−8·5	75,307	73,807	−2·0

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Attorney-General if he will make it his policy in the restructuring of the Crown Prosecution Service that it should not result in the use of legally qualified personnel in purely administrative or supervisory functions.

The Attorney-General: A primary aim of the Crown Prosecution Service restructuring is to ensure that the skills of its lawyers are concentrated on those tasks that require the attention of legally qualified staff.

A small number of lawyers may be employed for limited periods in administrative functions where this will contribute to their career development or where their experience as lawyers can make a helpful contribution to the management, administration or recruitment of legally qualified staff.

Discontinued Court Cases

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Attorney-General how many criminal cases have been discontinued by the Crown Prosecution Service *(a)* in the magistrates court and *(b)* in the Crown court, in the last available year.

The Attorney-General: During the 12 months ending June 1993, the CPS did not proceed with cases in respect of 191,622 defendants in magistrates courts, and 8,500 defendants in the Crown court.

These figures comprise all such cases in the 13 CPS areas, but do not include the specialised casework undertaken by the headquarters of the service.

War Crimes Act 1991

Mr. Allason: To ask the Attorney-General if he will make a statement when a decision is taken as to the bringing of charges under the War Crimes Act 1991.

The Attorney-General: No. The Crown Prosecution Service is presently considering interim reports from the Metropolitan police relating to several individuals and further inquiries are being made. Inquiries are not yet complete and the question of possible prosecution cannot be considered until they are concluded. In accordance with the requirements of the War Crimes Act 1991, my consent would be sought in any case where the Crown Prosecution Service considers that proceedings are appropriate. Decisions about prosecution will be communicated to the prospective defendant and other interested parties by the Crown Prosecution Service and the police in the usual manner.

Offences Against the Person

Mr. Blair: To ask the Attorney-General (1) how many charges under *(a)* section 18 and *(b)* section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 were (i) received by the Crown Prosecution Service from police, (ii) discontinued by the Crown Prosecution Service and (iii) completed in court for each year since the establishment of the Crown Prosecution Service;

(2) how many offences listed for trial under *(a)* section 18 and *(b)* section 20, *(c)* section 47 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 and *(d)* section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 resulted in a caution in court, in a bind over, or in no evidence being offered by the prosecution for each year since the establishment of the Crown Prosecution Service;

(3) how many cases which were passed by the police to the Crown Prosecution Service had their original police charges down graded to a lesser offence before the court case was completed, for each year since the establishment of the Crown Prosecution Service;

(4) how many charges of *(a)* occasioning actual bodily harm, *(b)* common assault under section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 and *(c)* assault on a constable under section 51(1) of the Police Act 1964 were (i) received by the Crown Prosecution Service from police, (ii) discontinued by the Crown Prosecution Service and (iii) completed in court for each year since the establishment of the Crown Prosecution Service;

(5) how many cases charged with actual bodily harm by the police under section 47 of the Public Order Act 1861 resulted in (i) a charge of assault on a constable in the magistrates court under section 51(1) of the Police Act 1964 and (ii) a charge of common assault and battery in the magistrates court under section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, for each year since the establishment of the Crown Prosecution Service.

The Attorney-General: The information sought by the hon. Member is recorded only on the files relating to individual defendants and is not collected or collated centrally. The information requested could therefore be collected only at disproportionate cost.

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Class Actions

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what proposals the Lord Chancellor has for the bringing of class actions before the civil courts.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The regulation of class actions in the courts is an extremely complex subject, not least because of the wide variety of such actions. The Lord Chancellor is currently considering how best to investigate the options in this area.

Crown Courts

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what provision is being made for improvements to accommodation and facilities at Crown courts for victims of crime.

Mr. John M. Taylor: In court buildings currently under construction, separate waiting rooms are provided for defence and prosecution witnesses, and there is a witness waiting room with direct acccess into the courtroom, adjacent to the witness box. Since a high proportion of victims of crime are also witnesses, they would receive assistance from the Crown Prosecution Service or from voluntary agencies such as Victim Support in the larger Crown court centres. Some court centres are able to provide special witness waiting rooms equipped with closed circuit television equipment (CCTV) which enable vulnerable witnesses to give evidence remote from the courtroom.

Existing Crown court centres are subject to building constraints, and it is not always feasible to incorporate desired improvements. However, operational arrangements are made to assist vulnerable witnesses who made themselves known to court staff, and to seat relatives of victims of crime within the courtroom wherever possible.

Mr. Michael: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department how many cases were dealt with in the Crown court in each year since 1980 and in the last month for which figures are available.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The table shows the number of committals for trial, committals for sentence and appeals dealt with in the Crown court in each year since 1980 and in the month of September 1993. The latter figures are provisional and liable to revision to take account of any late amendments.

Cases committed for trial, for sentence and appeals dealt with in the Crown court 1980-1993

	Committals for trial	*Committals for sentence*	*Appeals*
1980	57,271	14,973	17,859
1981	61,929	15,223	17,573
1982	66,184	14,544	20,775
1983	72,567	11,521	18,775
1984	74,777	9,141	20,350
1985	82,788	9,427	21,059
1986	86,426	7,581	18,925
1987	96,197	7,867	17,053
1988	104,773	8,485	15,849
1989	101,232	8,267	16,860
1990	100,005	8,656	17,557
1991	101,999	9,943	18,433
1992	100,742	9,543	19,765
September 1993	6,855	928	2,073

"A New Framework for Local Justice"

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what is the total number of representations received by the Lord Chancellor in regard to the White Paper, "A New Framework for Local Justice", and how many were from serving magistrates, whether stipendiary or lay.

Mr. John M. Taylor: In addition to 964 responses to the consultation documents issued by his Department, the Lord Chancellor has received in the region of 650 representations on the White Paper, comprising approximately 350 letters from hon. Members and approximately 300 letters from members of the magistrates courts service and other interested bodies, the majority of which were from serving magistrates. He has also received personal representations from 10 magistrates.

Vocational Training

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if the Lord Chancellor will be making representations to the Council for Legal Education's inquiry into vocational training for the bar of England and Wales.

Mr. John M. Taylor: This is an inquiry into allegations of racial discrimination at the Inns of Court School of Law which is run by the Council for Legal Education on behalf of the Bar Council. The administration of the inquiry is a matter for the profession itself, but the Lord Chancellor awaits the results with interest.

Legal Aid

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if a full cost-benefit analysis has been conducted by the Lord Chancellor into the cuts in eligibility for legal aid.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The Lord Chancellor has set out clearly the forecast effects of the eligibility changes introduced in April 1993—in particular, in his evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee earlier this year. On these assessments, the Lord Chancellor has no doubt that the overall effect of the eligibility measures will be to reduce significantly over the next three years the level of public expenditure that would have occurred in the absence of these measures.

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what are the conclusions of the Lord Chancellor's analysis of the reasons for the rise in demand for legal aid and for the increase in costs per case.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The reasons for the rise in the demand for legal aid and for the increase in costs per case are many and complex. Among the factors which have an impact on legal aid expenditure are the propensity to litigate, police detection rates and cautioning policy, and

the impact of new legislation, all of which are, by their nature, difficult to quantify. The Lord Chancellor's Department is currently considering how it can improve the methodology it uses in forecasting legal aid expenditure.

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what are the initial findings of the Lord Chancellor's monitoring of the effects of the eligibility cuts in legal aid.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The changes were expected to affect mainly the civil legal aid scheme and the advice and assistance scheme. It is still too soon to draw firm conclusions, but the changes appear to be having broadly the effect which was anticipated.

Recorders

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department how many representations the Lord Chancellor has received as to the adequacy of the Budget for *(a)* recorders and *(b)* assistant recorders.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Following the reduction in planned sittings by part-time judges because of a decrease in the number of cases received, the Lord Chancellor received two inquiries as to the adequacy of the budget for recorders and assistant recorders.

Birmingham Pub Bombings

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will provide estimates for the cost of *(a)* the trial of the six people charged with the Birmingham pub bombings, *(b)* their 1976 appeal, *(c)* their civil action against the west midlands and Lancashire police, *(d)* their 1987 appeal, *(e)* their 1991 appeal, *(f)* their prosecution of the police officers involved in the Birmingham Six case and *(g)* the 1977 prosecution of 14 prison officers from Winson Green in connection with injuries inflicted on the six defendants.

Mr. John M. Taylor: I regret that it has not proved possible to provide an answer before prorogation since the information requested is not readily available. I shall write to the hon. Member and place a copy in the Library.

ENVIRONMENT

Housing

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what supplementary credit approvals are being made available for housing purposes to local authorities; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: The following supplementary credit approvals are being made available for housing purposes in 1993-94:

Estate action—to improve rundown local authority housing estates—£185·2 million.

Housing partnership fund—to support housing projects which will bring lasting benefit to local communities and industry, particularly in authorities with relatively low access to capital receipts—£30 million.

Flats over shops—to bring empty or underused accommodation over shops back into residential use—£10 million.

Green house programme—to promote energy efficiency in local authority housing, by establishing energy efficiency demonstration projects—£5 million.

Defective ex-new town stock—to assist local authorities which have received defective property from new towns—£0·35 million.

Admissible basic credit approval supplement—to enable certain authorities to qualify for housing subsidy up to the limit of their basic credit approval—£0·157 million.

In addition, some £391·813 million of supplementary credit approval resources are being made available to local authorities as credit cover for specified capital grant allocations for private sector renewal.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 27 April, *Official Report*, column *339*, if he will update the table on housing capital spending by region for 1992-93.

Mr. Baldry: The available information is given in the table. The provisional outturn for local authority housing capital expenditure for 1992-93 is £2·7 billion.

Local authority housing capital expenditure by region, 1992-93
£ million

	Current prices	*1981 prices*[1]
North (excluding Cumbria)	118	63
Yorkshire and Humberside	216	114
East Midlands	180	96
Eastern	228	121
Greater London	492	261
South East	282	149
South West	189	100
West Midlands	310	164
North West	383	203
Unallocated	252	133
	2,650	1,404

[1] Current price figures have been converted to 1981 prices by excluding the effect of general inflation as measured by the gross domestic product market prices deflator.

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what are the figures for gross public investment in England and Wales in the provision of housing, both new build and renovated, by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations for each year since 1979-80 with the projected investment for both categories up to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices; and if he will publish this information in the form of a table.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The available information is given in the tables. Expenditure levels in future years are for local authorities to determine in the light of available resources. The forecasts shown in the Housing Corporation's published 1993 approved development programme for 1994-95 and 1995-96, expressed in 1992-93 prices, are £1,729 million and £1,588 million respectively. These figures exclude any private financed investment by housing associations.

For information about Wales, I refer the hon. Member to the Secretary of State for Wales.

Local authority gross housing capital expenditure for new house building and renovation, England, 1979-80 to 1992-93

£ million

Year	New house building		Renovation		Totals	
	Cash	1992-93 prices	Cash	1992-93 prices	Cash	1992-93 prices
1979-80	1,065	2,547	723	1,730	1,788	4,277
1980-81	965	1,951	670	1,354	1,635	3,305
1981-82	720	1,327	620	1,144	1,340	2,470
1982-83	685	1,179	962	1,656	1,647	2,835
1983-84	682	1,122	1,148	1,889	1,830	3,010
1984-85	730	1,142	1,280	2,004	2,010	3,147
1985-86	579	859	1,315	1,951	1,894	2,812
1986-87	458	658	1,521	2,187	1,979	2,846
1987-88	457	623	1,742	2,375	2,199	2,998
1988-89	578	734	1,904	2,419	2,482	3,154
[illegible]90	705	841	2,953	3,520	3,658	4,362
[illegible]91	447	493	1,721	1,900	2,168	2,393
[illegible]1-92	252	261	1,448	1,499	1,700	1,760
1992-93[1]	116	116	1,486	1,486	1,602	1,602

[1] Provisional figures are available only for 1992-93.

Housing Corporation gross capital expenditure, England 1979-80 to 1992-93

£ million

Year	Cash	1992-93 prices
1979-80	400	957
1980-81	508	1,027
1981-82	521	961
1982-83	755	1,299
1983-84	734	1,207
1984-85	697	1,091
1985-86	711	1,055
1986-87	715	1,028
1987-88	752	1,025
1988-89	791	1,005
1989-90	935	1,115
1990-91	1,063	1,174
1991-92	1,586	1,642
1992-93[1]	2,369	2,369

[1] Provisional figures are available only for 1992-93.

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing the total gross public spending for each year since 1985-86 and the projected expenditure for each year to 1995-96, in 1992-93 prices for the Housing Corporation.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The main element of the Housing Corporation's expenditure is its approved development programme (ADP) which is funded by grant and loans from the Government, as well as the corporation's receipts. Gross capital expenditure on the ADP in England since 1985-86 has been as follows:

	£ million	In 1992-93 prices
1985-86	711	1,055
1986-87	715	1,028
1987-88	752	1,025
1988-89	791	1,005
1989-90	935	1,115
1990-91	1,063	1,174
1991-92	1,586	1,642
1992-93	2,369	2,369
1993-94	1,842	1,793

The forecasts shown in the Housing Corporation's published 1993 approved development programme for 1994-95 and 1995-96, expressed in 1992-93 prices, are £1,729 million and £1,588 million respectively. In addition, since 1989 some £2 billion of private finance has been levered in to support the Housing Corporation's programme.

Cancer Clusters

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representation his Department had at the conference organised by the European Commission on Cancer Clusters held at the Westlakes research institute in Cumbria in early October.

Mr. Yeo: None.

Rough Sleepers Initiative

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what changes he proposes to make to the rough sleepers initiative.

Sir George Young: The Government have made £86 million available over 1993-94 to 1995-96 to continue the rough sleepers initiative. On 18 January this year my Department issued a discussion paper, "The Rough Sleepers Initiative: The Next Three Years", setting out proposals aimed at ensuring closer targeting of these resources on the initiative's client group. After considering the responses to that paper, I issued a strategy document on 16 June which set out the Government's intentions for the next phase. I have no plans to make further changes to the initiative. Copies of the discussion paper and the strategy document are in the Library.

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has for the future of the rough sleepers initiative; how many people are currently accommodated by the scheme; and what will become of them when the scheme ends.

Sir George Young: The sum of £96 million has been spent over the past three financial years, 1990-91 to 1992-93, under the Government's rough sleepers initiative (RSI) to provide up to 3,450 places in permanent and temporary accommodation for people who would otherwise have slept rough on the streets of central London. Independent research, funded by my Department,

found that several thousand people with a history of sleeping rough had been found accommodation through this initiative.

The Government have made £86 million available from 1993-94 to 1995-96 to continue the RSI. We will continue to concentrate resources on providing at least 1,500 further places in permanent housing. The temporary hostels and leased accommodation will be phased out over the next three years, but 3,300 places in permanent housing association homes provided under the RSI will continue to be available after the initiative ends in March 1996.

Valuation Appeals

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the average time from appeal against the valuation list to settlement by the local valuation tribunal.

Mr. Baldry: A meaningful figure cannot yet be given, since few council tax appeals have been dealt with by valuation tribunals. A great many cases are in any event being settled by agreement between the Valuation Office agency and the taxpayer, rather than by a tribunal decision.

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what mechanisms there are whereby a successful appellant against the valuation list for council tax can recover appeal costs or the interest on tha prepaid council tax which is subsequently to be returned.

Mr. Baldry: None. Tribunal hearings are intended to be as informal as possible, and the costs to appellants should therefore be low. Interest is not payable on any council tax payment refunded as a result of a successful appeal, as the sums involved are likely to be modest.

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what guidance is given by him to the local valuation tribunal on the time taken to decide appeals.

Mr. Baldry: None, since valuation tribunals are statutorily independent judicial bodies and it is for them to conduct their own proceedings as they see fit.

However, we expect the overwhelming majority of appeals to have been settled by the Valuation Office agency and the valuation tribunals by the end of 1994, and a high proportion well before then.

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many appeals against the valuation list have been lodged to date; how many have been decided since the local valuation tribunal commenced receiving appeals relating to the council tax valuation basis; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: At at 30 September 1993, 658,546 proposals for the alteration of the valuation list in England had been received by the Valuation Office agency, of which 77,825 had been settled by agreement between the agency and the taxpayer. Proposals are not normally transmitted to valuation tribunals as formal appeals until six months after receipt, unless it has become clear in the meantime that the prospects of agreement are remote.

Community Charges

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representation he has received regarding grants payable to local authorities under the Community Charges (General Reduction) Act 1991; what changes he now proposes; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: I am currently considering representations from a number of authorities proposing the extension of the community charge grant scheme to include community charges payable for the financial year 1991-92 which are received after 31 March 1994.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what contribution his Department made to the international symposium on nuclear waste management, held at Sellafield in mid-October, in terms of personnel in attendance and papers presented.

Mr. Yeo: I am not aware of any such meeting.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on ministerial responsibility for establishing a policy for long term disposal routes for radioactive waste as envisaged in paragraph 6 of the Government memorandum in reply to the seventh report of the Defence Committee of Session 1992-93, on the royal dockyards, and his answer of 1 November, *Official Report*, column 6.

Mr. Yeo: The radioactive wastes to which the question refers are those arising from the decommissioning of nuclear-propelled submarines. As stated in the reply which I gave to the hon. Member on 1 November, *Official Report*, column 6, these are a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence. Responsibility for civil radioactive waste management policy lies with my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for the Environment, for Scotland and for Wales. Issues needing wider collective consideration can be put to the relevant Cabinet Committee.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the environment what progress he has made in his review of local authorty standard spending assessments and the area cost adjustment mechanism; and whether it will be concluded before the standard spending assessment and revenue support grant figures are announced for 1994-95.

Mr. Baldry: The technical work on the review of local authority standard spending assessments (SSAs), including the area cost adjustment, has been cmpleted and discussed with the local authority associations. Proposed SSAs for 1994-95 will be announced later this year at the same time as the provisional revenue support grant settlement.

Local Authority Capital Receipts

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information he has on the level of accumulated capital receipts by each local authority.

Mr. Baldry: I am arranging for the latest information on the level of local authorities' usable capital receipts at 31 March 1993 to be placed in the Library of the House.

Sheltered Housing

Mr. Miller asked the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what plans he has to ensure that adequate consultation is given by managing agents of sheltered accommodation to leaseholders before major repairs to property are undertaken and before the property is transferred from one group of managing agents to another;

(2) what further plans he has to ensure that managing agents of privately owned sheltered accommodation are accountable to their leaseholders;

(3) what plans he has to introduce further statutory protection for leaseholders in sheltered accommodation;

(4) what plans he has to ensure that leaseholders in sheltered accommodation receive full and regular access to audited accounts;

(5) what plans he has to make the sheltered housing code of the National House Building Council compulsory for all developers; and what plans he has to make it legally enforceable;

(6) what plans he has to introduce an ombudsman service to offer protection to leaseholders in sheltered accommodation where the managing agents are not a registered housing association;

(7) how many cases since April 1989 have been brought by leaseholders in sheltered accommodation against their managing agents, under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1987, or under the terms of the lease; and what information he has on the results of such cases.

Sir George Young: All leaseholders are protected by the contractual terms of their leases, which define the rights and duties of landlords and tenants and the basis of the service charges. In addition, the Landlord and Tenant Acts of 1985 and 1987 give tenants additional statutory rights. They impose duties on landlords to consult before undertaking work above defined thresholds and—in certain circumstances—over the appointment of managing agents, and to provide information about costs and make available supporting accounts and documents.

The Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 gives leaseholders additional rights. It enables qualifying tenants to jointly purchase the freehold of their flats and also gives tenants the right to a management audit of their landlord by an independent accountant or surveyor.

It also enables the Secretary of State to approve codes of management practice governing property management. It is for outside bodies to submit any such codes to him for approval. The Association of Retirement Housing Managers yesterday published a draft code. He has no plans to make the sheltered housing code of the NHBC compulsory for all developers.

The Government have no plans to make further legislative changes to leaseholders rights in relation the management of their homes and is not persuaded of the case for an ombudsman scheme for privately owned sheltered housing nor of the practicality of this approach.

The Department has no information available to it on the number of cases brought before the courts by leaseholders in sheltered accommodation against their managing agents.

Local Authority Building Control

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what plans he has to review the fees to be charged by local authority building control departments to reflect the size, work type and the demography of the local authority; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will allow local authorities to meet the cost of providing services through building control charges compatible with charges made on the private sector; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: It remains the Government policy that the setting of building control fees should be devolved to local authorities when adequate private sector competition is in place. To further this aim, the Department issued a consultation document on 29 October—a copy of which was placed in the Library of the House—which seeks to increase the number of private sector inspectors exercising building control. Meanwhile, in conjunction with representatives of the local authority associations and the Building Regulations Advisory Committee, the Government are proposing:

(i) to introduce next year a revision and consolidation of the prescribed fees regulations which will tailor fees more appropriately to the type of building application involved; and

(ii) to explore the scope for introducing greater flexibility within the prescribed fees scheme.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received about the market testing of local authority building control fees; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: None. We have taken the view for the time being that it is not appropriate to subject regulatory services such as building regulation enforcement to compulsory competitive tendering. However, local authorities may choose to market test this work on a voluntary basis having regard to their obligations under statute.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish the performance indicators which are available in the building control sector; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: The Department does not publish performance indicators for building control. Under the terms of the Local Government Act 1992 it is the Audit Commission which is charged with the responsibility to decide, in consultation with the Department, on what indicators it may select for publication. Although the commission collects a wide range of information on local services, there are, at present, no plans for including the building control service. However, with the Department's encouragement, the local authority associations have drawn up a levels of service document on a voluntary basis and appropriate publication is currently under consideration.

Strychnus Potatorum Tree

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what research he has commissioned on the use of the strychnus potatorum tree for cleaning up readioactively contaminated land.

Mr. Yeo: No such research has been commissioned.

Housing Ombudsman (Reports)

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to make report recommendations of the housing ombudsman legally enforceable.

Sir George Young: A housing association tenants' ombudsman has recently been appointed and the new service will be fully operational next month. The Housing Corporation will use its statutory powers to issue management guidance to housing associations so that they will be expected to co-operate with the ombudsman and to carry out his recommendations in relation to specific cases. If an association did not co-operate or comply, this would be reported by the ombudsman to the Housing Corporation, which would then be able to use its statutory powers of regulation to address any issues of mismanagement.

Bathing Beaches

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the use of EC cohesion funds by member states to clean up bathing beaches to meet standards required under EC directives.

Mr. Yeo: The cohesion fund assists the poorest member states to improve their transport and environment infrastructure, including sewerage systems. We contribute only 5 per cent. of the cohesion fund, substantially less than France, Germany or Spain. We benefit from the EC structural funds and expect to receive about £10 billion from 1994-99. Investments in sewerage improvements can be supported by these funds.

Countryside Survey

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will publish the results of the countryside survey 1990.

Mr. Yeo: The countryside survey 1990 will be published on 17 November. The countryside survey is one of the most comprehensive surveys of the British countryside that has ever been carried out. It is also the first survey to be based on the integration of information from satellite imagery and traditional field survey methods. The United Kingdom is the first country to undertake a national survey of this kind.

The primary aims of the survey were to provide information on the stock of land cover, landscape features and habitats in Great Britain in 1990, to identify change in these by reference to earlier data, and to establish a new baseline for the measurement of future change. The main focus was on the rural environment. The survey was undertaken by the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology and the Institute of Freshwater Ecology. The main funding was provided by the Department of the Environment, the Natural Environment Research Council and the Department of Trade and Industry through the British National Space Centre.

The survey is a testament to the Government's commitment to reporting on the state of the countryside. The survey data will now be available for further research on the causes and consequences of countryside change.

Urban Regeneration Agency

Mr. Jacques Arnold: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when the urban regeneration agency will be established.

Mr. Gummer: The Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 gave statutory authority for the establishment of the urban regeneration agency. The agency will be launched on 10th November. Parliamentary approval to the new expenditure will be sought in a winter supplementary estimate for the urban aid and derelict land reclamation, England vote (class VII, vote 3). Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £9 million will be met by a repayable advance from the Contingencies Fund.

Swinden Quarry

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what arrangements he is making for ministerial decisions relating to Swinden quarry.

Mr. Gummer: Swinden quarry is in the constituency of my hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government and Planning. In these circumstances, I will take responsibility for all ministerial decisions.

Legal Services

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what are the Government's proposals for a de minimis threshold for compulsory competitive tendering of legal services.

Mr. Baldry: Competition provides many benefits to local authorities, including better managed services, higher quality work and significant financial savings. However, the Government recognise that it also brings with it additional administrative requirements which need to be taken into account.

My hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government and Planning told the House on 15 June 1993, in answer to a question from my hon. Friend the Member for Cirencester and Tewkesbury (Mr. Clifton-Brown), *Official Report*, column *543*, that the Government intended to apply the principle of a de minimis threshold to corporate and construction-related services as part of their decision to implement CCT for these services. He made it clear that, for the white collar services, an authority also needs to retain a satisfactory number of good quality staff to carry out work which is not suitable for compulsory competitive tendering. He indicated that we would discuss with local authority representatives the most appropriate threshold for each of the white collar services.

Following discussions on the threshold for legal services, the Government have concluded that local authorities should be permitted to carry out up to £300,000 of legal work a year using their own staff without being required to award that work through competition. This is broadly equivalent to the cost of employing six qualified legal staff, and will ensure that all authorities continue to have the legal skills necessary to serve local people effectively.

Those authorities exempted from CCT will nevertheless be free to tender services voluntarily. Many will, no doubt, take the opportunity to improve services and reduce costs by giving private sector legal services the chance to tender for work.

The Government intend to consult on the proposed competitive regime for local authority legal services, including details of this proposed de minimis threshold. Consultation will begin in December, and the Government will make final decisions in spring next year.

Housing, Lancashire

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to encourage the renovation of property in those areas of Lancashire where house prices are so low as to make renovation uneconomic.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 22 October 1993]:* It is for local authorities to determine the most satisfactory course of action for dealing with unfit properties. Exchequer subsidy is available to help the costs associated with the option of reduction, clearance and closure.

Council Housing (Replacement)

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the total expenditure provided in direct grant from central Government to local authorities for council house replacement since the introduction of the right to buy.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 26 October 1993]:* The provision of new social housing is now mainly the responsibility of housing associations, with local authorities increasingly concentrating on the management of their existing stock and on their broad enabling role. Central Government support to local authorities for these activities is provided through credit approvals. The amounts provided since 1981-82 are given in the table below. The figures for 1990-91 and subsequent years are not directly comparable with those for earlier years because of the revisions to the capital finance system introduced in April 1990. Local authorities can supplement these resources with spending from usable capital receipts and from revenue.

Local authority credit approval allocations[1]

	Numbers
1981-82	1,795
1982-83	2,192
1983-84	2,233
1984-85	1,852
1985-86	1,605
1986-87	1,459
1987-88	1,400
1988-89	1,331
1989-90	1,095
1990-91	1,561
1991-92	1,705
1992-93	1,538
1993-94	1,375

[1] Allocations for the years up to and including 1989-90 are final allocations, i.e. the initial allocation plus any increases made in-year. The allocation figures for 1990-91 and subsequent years are the credit approval provision figures for those years.

Rented Public Housing

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what proportion of gross domestic product was dedicated to building public sector houses for rent, annually, for each year since 1979.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 26 October 1993]:* The provision of new social housing is now mainly the responsibility of housing associations, although the houses they build are not public sector. Local authorities, on the other hand, are increasingly concentrating on the management of their existing stock and on their broad enabling role. To reflect this, gross capital expenditure through the Housing Corporation on new provision for rent rose from £484 million in 1981-82 to £2,231 million in 1992-93.

Reliable outturn information on housing expenditure by local authorities is available only on a financial year basis. Estimates of gross domestic product in England are not available for financial years. The cash figures are given:

Expenditure by local authorities and new towns on houses built for rent

	England cash value £ million
1978-79	1,674
1979-80	1,214
1980-81	1,121
1981-82	816
1982-83	710
1983-84	692
1984-85	748
1985-86	586
1986-87	466
1987-88	462
1988-89	580
1989-90	705
1990-91	447
1991-92	252
1992-93	116

Packaging

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will bring forward proposals to place a legal obligation upon companies not to mislead consumers about their environmental performance on packaging.

Mr. McLoughlin: I have been asked to reply.

Most environmental claims are already within the scope of the Trade Descriptions Act 1968. We intend to amend the Act in a number of respects as soon as parliamentary time permits, and have made it clear that environmental claims will be addressed.

Improvement and Repairs Grants

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing for each year since 1979 the number of improvement or repairs grants made, the number of applications unmet, the value of each grant and total spending thereon in cash in contract prices.

Mr. Gummer: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what estimate he makes, and from what source, of the cost of the backlog of repairs and maintenance required to bring *(a)* private housing and *(b)* public rented housing to an acceptable standard.

Mr. Gummer: I will write to the hon. Member.

Forests

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the analysis in, and conclusions of, the latest annual EC-United Nations report on the state of Europe's forests *(a)* in so far as it relates to United Kingdom forests and *(b)* in regard to pollution arising from the United Kingdom affecting forests abroad.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* I have been asked to reply.

The Forestry Commission assessed the condition of nearly 9,000 trees of five tree species—oak, beech, Scots pine, Norway spruce and Sitka spruce—in 1992, as a contribution to the 1993 report on forest condition in Europe produced jointly by the Commission of the European Communities and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (EC/UN-ECE).

In Britain, Scots pine and oak showed a decline in crown density compared with that in the previous year, the crown condition of Norway spruce was little changed, while that of Sitka spruce and beech had improved. In contrast, the EC/UN-ECE report concluded that, in Europe as a whole, all five species showed a decline in crown density.

The EC/UN-ECE report made no comment on the effect of air pollution from the United Kingdom on forests in Europe. However, there has been a significant reduction in emissions in the United Kingdom since the European Community's large combustion plants directive was implemented and, in comparison with 1980, we are committed to reducing emissions of sulphur dioxide by 60 per cent. over the next 10 years and of oxides of nitrogen by 30 per cent. over the next five years.

WALES

Ewe Premiums

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many farmers in Wales are currently eligible for ewe annual premium payments; how many claims for payment have been received; how many have been paid; and when those outstanding claims will be paid.

Mr. Redwood: We estimate from the pattern of claims usually received that about 17,500 farmers in Wales are eligible for sheep annual premium; 17,445 eligible claims were received in 1993 of which 8,603 have been paid. All outstanding claims will be paid as soon as possible.

Mr. Hanson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he expects the completion of payments for the ewe premium scheme for 1993-94.

Mr. Redwood: The combined payment of the first and second instalments are well advanced and should be virtually completed this month. The final payment will be made in the spring of 1994 when the full rate of premium for the year has been calculated.

Public Appointments

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many persons were listed in the Welsh Office register for public appointments in each of the last five years; how many in each year were below 40 years of age; and how many in each year were women.

Mr. Redwood: The departmental register of candidates for public appointment is a running list to which names are frequently added. Information is not available on a calendar year basis, nor is information on the age of candidates recorded centrally. Currently there are 4,096 names on the register, of which 1,135, 27·7 per cent., are women.

Morriston Hospital, Swansea

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the membership of the project board established to manage the development of cardiac services at Morriston hospital, Swansea; and when a detailed timetable for the project will be finalised.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The project board comprises three representatives from Morriston hospital, including the unit general manager, and one each from West Glamorgan health authority and my Department. The timetable will be finalised shortly.

Magor to Castleton Relief Road

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received regarding the Magor to Castleton M4 relief road; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Many views have been received about proposals for the M4 Magor to Castleton relief road. An announcement will be made in due course following completion of the detailed consideration of all comments.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list each NHS trust in Wales with the date when it first became operational.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The details are as follows:

Trust	*Operational date 1 April*
1. Pembrokeshire NHS Trust	1992
2. Glan Clwyd District General Hospital NHS Trust	1993
3. Wrexham Maelor Hospital NHS Trust	1993
4. Clwydian Community Care NHS Trust	1993
5. Powys Health Care NHS Trust	1993
6. Glan Hafren NHS Trust	1993
7. Gwent Community Health NHS Trust	1993
8. Llandough Hospital NHS Trust	1993
9. Bridgend and District NHS Trust	1993
10. Swansea NHS Trust	1993
11. Llanelli Dinefwr NHS Trust	1993
12. Carmarthen and District NHS Trust	1993
13. Ceredigion and Mid Wales NHS Trust	1993
14. South and East Wales Ambulance NHS Trust	1993

Home Helps

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will establish a standard scale for the means testing of clients by county councils in Wales for home help.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: This is a matter for local authorities. I am, however, considering whether further guidance to local authorities on the principles to be applied in determining discretionary changes for home care services is necessary.

Schools Technology Initiative

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much money his Department has allocated to each secondary school for the schools technology initiative for *(a)* grant-maintained 11 to 18 schools, *(b)* grant-maintained 11 to 16 schools, *(c)* local authority 11 to 18 schools and *(d)* local authority 11 to 16 schools.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Strategies have been approved for the following schools in each of the categories as follows:

(a) Grant-maintained 11-18 schools
£245,000 to Bishop Vaughan Grant Maintained School

(b) Grant-maintained 11-16 schools
None

(c) LEA-Maintained 11-18 schools
£1,403,000 for 6 schools as follows;
(1) £250,000 to Bedwas Comprehensive School
(2) £210,000 to Morriston Comprehensive School
(3) £244,000 to Queen Elizabeth Maridunum School
(4) £237,000 to Ysgol David Hughes
(5) £223,000 to Cynffig Comprehensive School
(6) £239,000 to Ysgol Morgan Llwyd

(d) LEA-Maintained 11-16 schools
£245,000 to Risca Comprehensive School

In addition to the above, £212,000 was approved for Denbigh technological and vocational education centre within Clwyd education authority.

Grant-maintained school strategies are funded by capital grant and LEA maintained schools by local authority capital credit approvals.

Llandudno General Hospital

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement regarding the future of the acute unit of Llandudno general hospital.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Llandudno general hospital is an integral part of the Gwynedd acute health unit which has applied for NHS trust status from April 1994. The application explicitly notes a commitment to maintaining and developing the services provided at Llandudno general hospital. My right hon. Friend expects to announce his decision on the application very shortly.

Special Education Schools, Powys

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement regarding the future of Cyfronydd and Bryn Llywarch special education schools in Powys.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The proposals by Powys county council to close Cyfronydd and to change the character of Brynllywarch school are before my right hon. Friend for determination. A decision will be issued as soon as possible.

Libraries

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many public libraries in Wales are open for 60 hours a week or more.

Sir Wyn Roberts: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Public Library Statistics for 1991-92, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Departmental Advisers

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many special advisers are currently employed by his Department; at what cost; what is the duration of their appointment; and what are their qualifications and duties in each case.

Mr. Redwood: I appointed Mr. Hywel Williams from 18 October 1993 to advise on a range of subjects for as long as is considered necessary.

He is the only such adviser employed by the Welsh Office. We do not reveal the salary nor the costs of an individual appointment.

I issued a press notice on October 21 with information about Mr. Williams and enclose a copy.

Estuarial Crossings

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales which estuarial crossings have received central Government assistance in the form of grant, loan or debt write-off or suspension; and how much assistance has been given, and in what form, in each case.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Dyfed county council received a £4 million interest-free loan from the Government in 1979 to assist with the capital costs of the Cleddau bridge. Some £2¼ million of transport grant has been made available to West Glamorgan county council and Dyfed county council since 1987-88 towards the cost of the Loughor bridge. Prior to this, the scheme was financed largely by the authorities under the then transport supplementary grant block arrangements.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales which estuarial crossings are the responsibility of *(a)* central Government, *(b)* local authorities and *(c)* private owners; and which of these are (i) subject to tolls and (ii) not subject to tolls.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Available information is as follows:

Estuarial crossings	*Responsibility*	*Tolled*
Conwy Crossing	Central Government	No
Cleddau Bridge	Local Authority	Yes
Loughor Bridge	Local Authority	No
Penmaenpool Bridge (Dolgellau)	Local Authority	Yes
Porthmadog Cob	Private Owner	Yes
Briwet Bridge (Penrhyndeudraeth)	Private Owner	Yes
Barmouth Bridge (Footbridge)	Private Owner	Yes

Suicide

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many suicides were reported of patients receiving *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* out-patient psychiatric care in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information is not available centrally in the form requested.

Mental Health Services

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what consultations he has had with the south Glamorgan health authority regarding the Health Advisory Service report on mental health services in South Glamorgan; and what advice he has given on the guidelines for publication of HAS reports.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Health Advisory Service review was commissioned by South Glamorgan health authority following discussion with the Welsh Office. The final report of the review, conducted jointly with the social services inspectorate (Wales), is currently awaited. The report will be published in the usual way, that is the health authority and county council will have available printed copies supplied by the Health Advisory Service. Copies will also be available from the health advisory service and the social services inspectorate (Wales).

Local Government Finance

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, pursuant to his answer of 27 October, *Official Report*, column *640-42*, if he will provide similar figures for capital allocations for local authorities in 1993-94 with an explanation of the effect of *(a)* the transfer-out of further education and *(b)* the revised presentations of Welsh Office credit approval support for European regional development fund related schemes.

Mr. Redwood: The information requested is giving in the following tables. The effect in 1993-94 of the transfer of provision for further education to the Further Education Funding Council was to transfer Government support of £8·9 million from local authorities. In addition to the sums shown and in accordance with the Government's agreement with the European Commission, supplementary credit approvals will be issued to local authorities to cover all expenditure funded by ERDF grants.

Table 1: Basic Credit Approvals (BCA) issued to counties for 1993-94 (£ million)[1]

	BCA
Clwyd	10·0
Dyfed	10·3
Gwent	11·0
Gwynedd	6·4
Mid Glamorgan	14·6
Powys	5·3
South Glamorgan	9·9
West Glamorgan	9·6
Total counties	77·1

[1] Covering education, personal social services, fire, sheltered employment, "other services" and certain elements of transport (principally smaller road schemes and capitalised administration).

Table 2: New Control Total (NCT) and Assumed Gross Expenditure (AGE) for 1993-94

(£ million)[1]

	NCT	*AGE*
Education	40·1	48·9
Personal Social Services	12·2	14·5
Transport	96·1	107·0
Other Local Services	41·4	114·4
Housing	263·9	305·5
Urban Programme[2]	29·9	29·9
Total	483·5	620·1

[1] Excluding Law and Order.
[2] Including Rural Initiative.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Alan W. Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the number of children with special educational needs that have been statemented for every local education authority in Wales for each year since 1990.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The numbers of children for whom statements of special educational needs were made for the first time during each calendar year since 1990 are given in the following table:

	1990	*1991*	*1992*
Clwyd	318	251	251
Dyfed	225	272	397
Gwent	402	480	497
Gwynedd	130	205	178
Mid Glamorgan	490	545	583
Powys	120	134	55
South Glamorgan	184	215	274
West Glamorgan	358	354	415

Cattle Identification Documents

Mr. Hanson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the cost of administering the cattle identification document scheme in Wales for the year 1993-94.

Mr. Redwood: The costs of staffing the permanent posts created to administer the beef special premium scheme will amount to about £353,000 in the 1993-94 financial year. Staff have also been redeployed from other work for varying periods, and some casual staff employed, to help with the one-off tasks of establishing the scheme.

Teachers

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many students qualified to be teachers left the University of Wales and the teacher training colleges of Wales at the end of each academic year since 1985; how many were qualified in each of the main subjects; and how many were qualified to teach their subject through the medium of Welsh.

Sir Wyn Roberts *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

TRANSPORT

Railtrack

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people he expects Railtrack to employ; and in what occupations.

Mr. Freeman: Railtrack will be responsible for railway infrastructure, and for deciding how many employees it will need, and in what capacities, to fulfil that responsibility in the most efficient manner.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures Railtrack will be able to use in order to carry out its role of safety validation for train operators.

Mr. Freeman: Railtrack's safety validation role will be governed by the Health and Safety Commission's Railways (Safety Case) Regulations published in draft for consultation purposes in July 1993.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the resources in terms of staffing and money he expects Railtrack to need to carry out its role of safety validation for train operators.

Mr. Freeman: This is a matter for Railtrack. Railtrack will need to demonstrate in its safety case to the satisfaction of the Health and Safety Executive that sufficient staff and resources are available.

Railways Funding

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies have been made of the Swedish model of public funding of the railways and of charging costs to operators.

Mr. Freeman: I visited Sweden last year and discussed the Swedish Government's policy for funding, restructuring and liberalising access to their national railway system, with Ministers, representatives of the Swedish state railway, and private sector rail operators. We have continued to monitor the development of Swedish railway policy.

Goods Vehicle Operators Licences

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what checks are carried out by his staff to ensure that negative answers to question 22, relating to criminal convictions, on form GV79 "Application for a Goods Vehicle Operators Licence" are truthful.

Mr. Key: Full records of criminal convictions are not available to the licensing authorities or traffic area offices. However, all applications for goods vehicle operator licences are published in advance of the grant of a licence and circulated to the police, who have a statutory right to make a formal objection to a licence being granted. In some cases, checks may also be made of any records held by the Vehicle Inspectorate on the applicant.

Vehicle Testing Stations

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans the Vehicle Inspectorate has to carry out an inspection of all VI testing stations to determine whether they meet all the relevant safety standards required by similar workplaces in the private sector.

Mr. Key: The Vehicle Inspectorate already carries out a comprehensive range of regular inspections of its properties, and associated equipment, with the intention of ensuring compliance with all relevant safety standards. Some inspections are carried out to conform with "best practice" where this exceeds legal requirements.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many sick leave days were taken by *(a)* male and *(b)* female staff employed in the Vehicle Inspectorate in 1992.

Mr. Key: As at June 1992 the Vehicle Inspectorate employed 1,389 male and 607 female staff on a part and full time basis. 10,651 and 8,144 days were lost through sick absence by male and female staff respectively during the year. The sick absence figures include weekends where they occurred during a period of sickness.

Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received about noise mitigation measures on the proposed channel tunnel rail link in relation to trains travelling *(a)* at 185 mph and *(b)* at other speeds; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Freeman: The possible noise impact of high speed trains features in a number of representations received on the proposed channel tunnel rail link. Mitigation measures such as screens and banks will be provided so that as far as practically possible the noise design aims set by Union Railways are not exceeded for homes and other sensitive receptors. The noise predictions used in planning mitigation measures take account of the assumed speeds for each part of the route. Any homes not benefiting sufficiently from mitigation measures may qualify for noise insulation.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will give his reasons for limiting international stations on the proposed high speed rail link from London to Folkestone to one additional station between King's Cross-St. Pancras and Ashford; and what is his policy on the provision of other stations to serve regional and national purposes.

Mr. Freeman: No maximum number of international stations has been set. The limitation is financial viability bearing in mind that public subsidy for international stations is forbidden. The provision of both international and domestic stations is addressed in Union Railways' recent report and the Government are considering this and the bids received from the promoter groups for the potential stations.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the full consultation period on all the Union Railways options was expected to expire; and when the Union Railways report on proposals for a high speed channel tunnel link was submitted to him.

Mr. Freeman: Comments from local authorities, action groups and other bodies affected by the route and station options have been sought by 12 November. Comments from the public should be sent by then or very soon afterwards. Union Railways' report was submitted to the Government on 29 October.

A1-M1 Link Road

Mr. Batiste: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make an announcement about the A1-M1 link road.

Mr. Key: The public inquiry into this scheme was held in January-February this year.

A decision on the way forward will be made as soon as practicable after the joint Secretaries of State for Transport and the Environment have given full and careful consideration to the inspector's recommendations.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is his policy regarding building roads through sites of special scientific interest; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The Government have a long-standing policy of keeping roads away from protected areas such as sites of special scientific interest wherever possible. In cases where it is impossible to avoid such sites the greatest care is taken to design the road sensitively and, where practicable, to preserve or recreate habitats, to relocate plant and animal species and to screen the road by the extensive use of planting and landscaping.

Jubilee Line Extension

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps towards the construction of North Greenwich station are included in contract JLE 110.

Mr. Norris: JLE contract 110 has not yet been awarded, and final decisions have not yet been taken on what should be included in it.

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if the private sector contributions to the Jubilee line extension, to be paid over the next 20 years, will be £300 million at current values or uprated to keep up with inflation.

Mr. Norris: Olympia and York Canary Wharf Limited has undertaken to pay London Underground Limited £300 million cash over a 24-year period starting one year after the first day of operation of the Jubilee line extension. The funding agreement under which these payments are to be made implements the understanding reached in 1989 between my Department and Olympia and York Canary Wharf Limited.

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how he plans to fund the construction of North Greenwich station; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: London Underground Limited is reponsible for the construction of the Jubilee Line Extension funded by grants from Government and private sector contributions, notably the £400 million pledged by Olympia and York Canary Wharf Limited. British Gas has also promised a contribution in connection with the decision to locate a station at North Greenwich.

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what contracts for the Jubilee line extension are concerned with the construction of North Greenwich station.

Mr. Norris: The civil engineering work on the station will be carried out under contract 110; the electrical and mechanical work will be carried out under various E and M contracts.

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps are required to be taken to ensure the construction of a Jubilee line station at North Greenwich, above ground and providing a full service to the public from the first day of operation of the Jubilee line extension in terms of *(a)* negotiations between London Underground and third parties, *(b)* decontamination of contaminated land, *(c)* clearing of derelict land, *(d)* construction of new roads and other access routes to the station and *(e)* any other work or negotiations concerning the proposed site of the station and surrounding area.

Mr. Norris: London Underground Limited is preparing to let a contract for the construction of the station at North Greenwich. However, if that contract is to make full provision so that the station can open, there must first be a satisfactory conclusion to the negotiations between British Gas and London Regional Transport about the financial contribution which BG undertook to make in 1990 when it was agreed to take the line through their property in North Greenwich. The allocation of financial responsibility for specific matters such as land decontamination, derelict land clearance, road access, car parking, and bus facilities is for agreement between BG and LRT.

Rail Franchising, Isle of Wight

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how safety validation for railways will work on the vertically integrated franchise system planned for the Isle of Wight.

Mr. Freeman: The Health and Safety Executive will be responsible for examining and validating the safety case of an operator of a vertically integrated franchise on the Isle of Wight.

Bromford Viaduct

Mr. Rooker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the holding down bolts of the central crash barrier of the Bromford viaduct of the M6 midland links motorway were last tested; what were the results; and on what date they are due to be tested again.

Mr. Key: The last tests on the holding down bolts were some limited pull-out tests in 1985. The results were generally below the level in the current specification but this was not applicable when the barrier was originally erected. The performance to date of the central reservation barriers on Bromford viaduct has been satisfactory.

We have no proposals for further tests on the holding down bolts, but the barrier, including the holding down arrangements will be replaced as part of two major maintenance contracts. These are presently programmed for 1994-95 and 1995-96 and will involve resurfacing, concrete repairs and other works on the viaduct.

Estuarial Crossings

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which estuarial crossings have received central Government assistance in the form of grant, loan or debt-write-off or suspension; and how much assistance he has been given, and in what form, in each case.

Mr. Key: Central Government grants were given towards the first Mersey crossing which opened in 1934 (£2·5 million) the first Dartford-Thurrock tunnel which opened in 1963 (£2·6 million) and the Tyne tunnel which opened in 1967 (£3 million). Since then central Government finance for estuarial crossings has been in the form of loans. In 1992 the debts outstanding were £359 million on the Humber bridge, £112 million on the Mersey

tunnels, £13 million on the Tyne tunnels and £4 million on the Severn bridge. The most recent estuarial crossing, at Dartford-Thurrock and Severn, were or are being built with private finance. The Government have accepted that loans to the Humber bridge cannot be serviced and repaid from toll revenue alone and, to date, grants totalling £72 million have been paid.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which estuarial crossings are the responsibility of *(a)* central Government, *(b)* local authorities and *(c)* private owners; and which of these are (i) subject to tolls and (ii) not subject to tolls.

Mr. Key: Apart from the bridge carrying the M2 over the Medway and the Avonmouth bridge carrying the M5, both of which are the responsibility of the Department of Transport, tolls are charged at all estuarial crossings in England. Central Government are responsible for the Dartford-Thurrock crossings and the Severn bridge, though operational responsibility rests with private concessionaries. Local authorities are responsible for the Tyne and Mersey tunnels and the Tamar and Humber bridges. No estuarial crossings are privately owned.

Eastern Relief Road, Lowestoft

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement detailing crossing points for pedestrians over the eastern relief road being built in Lowestoft.

Mr. Key: Crossing facilities for the road were discussed locally as the scheme was being developed by Suffolk county council and details of the proposed provision were included in consultation and briefing meetings.

There will be a signal controlled crossing to the west of the relief road's intersection with London Road North. This will replace the existing crossing on the opposite side of London Road North, across Old Nelson street.

There will also be uncontrolled crossing points using the splitter islands at the roundabout junction of the relief road with St. Peters street and Jubilee way.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement about how pedestrians are to cross the new eastern relief road being built in Lowestoft, from the northern ends of Tennyson road and Arnold street northwards, and return.

Mr. Key: The existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at the northern end of Tennyson road is not affected by the new road. Arnold street is truncated at its boundary with the relief road and a footway will be provided on the western side of the relief road. This will join with the uncontrolled crossing point at the splitter islands at the St. Peters street/Jubilee way roundabout, some 50 metres north of Arnold street.

Bus Fuels

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funds he has allocated for trials of clean fuels on local bus services.

Mr. Freeman: I have today allocated funds totalling £100,000 in 1993-94 to local authorities for four such trials. The projects to be supported are as follows:

Local authority/bus operator	*Fuel*	*£000s*	*Number of buses*
Hampshire/Southampton Citybus	CNG	42·5	6
Avon/Badgerline	LPG	16	2
Warwickshire/Midland Red South	LPG	16	2
Berkshire/Reading Buses	CNG	25·5	4

Notes:
CNG—compressed natural gas
LPB—liquefied petroleum gas

A27, Worthing

Mr. Higgins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to give a full reply to letters from Worthing borough council of 13 July, 23 September, 1 October, 14 October, 19 October and 22 October on the compulsory purchase orders issued by his Department in connection with the development of the A27 in the Worthing area; why replies have been delayed; on what specific legislation his Department has relied in the procedure it has adopted to deal with mistakes in the compoulsory purchase orders; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The Department has no record of receiving a letter from Worthing borough council dated 13 July until a copy was enclosed with the Council's letter of 1 October. A reply was sent on 7 October. A reply to the letter of 23 September was sent on 24 September. Replies to the letters of 14, 19 and 22 October were sent on 3 November.

Where discrepancies in land ownership details in the draft compulsory purchase order have been drawn to the Department's attention, they have followed the procedure laid down in schedule 1 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 to give notice of proposed amendments to those concerned.

Radioactive Materials

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer of 1 November, *Official Report*, column *8*, if he will list the four bodies from which his Department has received letters on the transport of radioactive materials.

Mr. Norris: The four bodies are:
University of Reading;
City of Nottingham;
Tonbridge and Malling borough council;
Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution.

Flights to Warsaw

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) why Lot Airlines has been forbidden to land at Heathrow with effect from 1 November;

(2) what intergovernmental agreements govern flights between London and Warsaw;

(3) when and in what circumstances agreement was made between Her Majesty's Government and the Polish Government and Lot Airlines on the winter flights schedule; and what is his policy on the number of British Airways flights between London and Warsaw;

(4) on what occasions over the last 10 years a dispute has occurred between British Airways and the national carriers of other countries about the increase in the number of flights from London to the other country's principal

airports where *(a)* Her Majesty's Government have been involved and *(b)* the sanction of removing the permit for the other national carriers to land at Heathrow has been imposed;

(5) when and on what basis Ministers were involved in negotiations with their Polish counterparts, and representatives of Lot Airlines, during October;

(6) what is the policy underlying Her Majesty's Government's support for British Airways to increase the frequency of their winter flights between London and Warsaw; and what impact he expects the increase to have on translantic flights made by United Kingdom and Polish air carriers;

(7) what representations the Government have received from Lot Airlines or the Polish Government on the number of winter flights to Warsaw by British Airways originating in *(a)* London and *(b)* north America, and on the summer schedules.

Mr. Norris: As talks are currently taking place to resolve the difficulty over the operation of air services between the United Kingdom and Poland, I shall write to the hon. Member.

Ragwort

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he takes to prevent the spread of ragwort on land owned by his Department.

Mr. Key *[holding answer 29 October 1993]:* A departmental working group is examining all aspects of grassland management, including the control of injurious weeds such as ragwort. I expect to announce decisions, based on the conclusions of this group, in the new year.

M62

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of vehicles on the M62 motorway at junction 17 have an origin or destination within the Greater Manchester area.

Mr. Key: In 1992 the annual average daily traffic flow on the section of M62 between junctions 15 and 17 was 123,400 vehicles, of which 77 per cent. had either an origin or destination within the Greater Manchester area. This figure includes traffic travelling within the Greater Manchester conurbation, including Bolton, Bury, Stockport, Oldham and Rochdale, and traffic between the Greater Manchester area and the wider road network giving access to areas outside the conurbation.

Mr. Sumberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of vehicles on the M62 motorway at junction 17 are travelling between Merseyside and Yorkshire.

Mr. Key: Seven per cent. of vehicles travel between Merseyside and Yorkshire—including Humberside. This is just one of a series of long-distance strategic trips which are made using the M62. Others include trips between Cheshire, south-west, Wales and Shropshire to Yorkshire.

Air Carriers

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criterion is used by his Department to define a United Kingdom air carrier; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: The criteria for the grant of operating licences to air carriers are laid down in EC Council regulation 2407/92 on the licensing of air carriers. The United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority may grant an operating licence only to carriers whose principal place of business and registered office is in the United Kingdom. The regulation further requires that holders of operating licences should at all times be majority owned and effectively controlled by EC member states or their nationals.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

GPA-General Electric (Merger)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will refer to the European Commission the transfer of assets from GPA to General Electric of the United States of America for consideration under the merger control regime.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The purchase of certain assets of GPA by General Electric did not fall within EC merger control jurisdiction. Following the advice of the Director General of Fair Trading, based on the information available to him, my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade announced that he had decided not to refer this merger to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission on 20 October.

EC Law

Mr. Steen: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will complete the scrutiny report on the operation of EC law in the United Kingdom; who is engaged in the review; when it will be published; and what action he is proposing to take to eliminate over-zealous interpretation by Whitehall officials of EC directives.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The scrutiny report on the implementation and enforcement of EC law in the United Kingdom, which was undertaken by an inter-departmental team of officials, was published on 20 July of this year. The period for consultation elapsed on 30 September. The Government are preparing an action programme in the light of consultation. We shall be publishing our response by the end of the year. This will include guidance on the negotiation and implementation of EC law in the United Kingdom, aimed at eliminating over-zealous interpretation.

Deregulation Task Forces

Mr. Steen: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many task forces into deregulation have now been established; what has been the cost of servicing the task forces; how many reports have been published; and if they will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: Eight task forces have been established, supported by a small secretariat of civil servants and secondees from the private sector. It is not possible to calculate the costs of that support in the time available. The task forces have not yet reported.

Enforcement Agencies

Mr. Steen: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will publish his paper on "Working with Business: A Code for Enforcement Agencies"; how many copies will be published; to whom it will be distributed; and what policing arrangements there will be to see that the code for enforcement agencies is enforced.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: "Working with Business: A Code for Enforcement Agencies" was published on 20 July; 70,000 copies have been published to date and copies distributed through enforcement agencies, local offices of the Department of Trade and Industry, British chambers of commerce, the Confederation of Business Industry, and the British Retail Consortium. More than 70 enforcement agencies are aiming to publish their own codes of practice by 1 January 1994 stating how they are putting into practice the principles set down in the code. Departmental deregulation Ministers are responsible for ensuring that this is done.

Regional Assistance

Mr. Pike: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the excess of the bid for objective 2 status based on EC target population; what discussions will take place with the EC to reduce the list to meet the target population specified by the European Commission; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what criteria is used by the European Commission to reduce the list of proposed objective 2 areas to meet the target population as specified by the Commission;

(2) what is the total population of the proposed objective 2 areas; and what is the amount by which that total exceeds the target population for objective 2 areas in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Sainsbury: The procedure is governed by article 9 of Council Regulation 2081/93, which

(a) sets out various statistical criteria for objective 2 areas;
(b) requires each member state to "propose" a list of areas;
(c) requires the Commission to "establish" the list taking into account the national priorities and situations, in close consultation with the Member State concerned, and after consulting an advisory committee of all member states; and
(d) stipulates that assistance should be genuinely concentrated on the areas most seriously affected

The last is known as the "principle of concentration". A recital of the regulation, which is not legally binding, says that objective 2

"could cover up to 15 per cent. of the Community population".

The previous regulation contained a similar recital, but the actual coverage was then 16 per cent.

I understand that the proposals of all member states together amount to 22 per cent. of the Community population. Neither the Council regulation nor the Commission specifies target populations in individual member states.

I shall shortly be meeting the Commissioner responsible. Our consultation will be governed by article 9 of the Council regulation.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Southwark and Bermondsey (Mr. Hughes) of 22 July, *Official Report*, column *366*, with which Governments and on what dates intergovernmental letters on nuclear waste have so far been exchanged.

Mr. Eggar: All contracts since 1976 for reprocessing overseas spent fuel in the thermal oxide reprocessing plant have been covered by inter governmental letters on the return of wastes arising. These have been exchanged with the authorities in Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Switzerland, normally before or shortly after the contracts to which they apply were signed.

British Gas

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list those individuals and organisations who have responded to his consultation on the Monopolies and Mergers report on British Gas; if he will summarise those views; and if he will place copies of all the submissions received in the Library.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: As at 1 November, my Department had received some 91 representations from a variety of companies, organisations, and individuals, covering a wide range of views. As the representations were made in confidence, it is not appropriate to give details, but I expect to be able to indicate the range of views in due course, once they have all been fully assessed and a decision has been taken.

Regional Aid (South Yorkshire)

Mr. Illsley: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how much of the EC funds committed to regional aid have been allocated to south Yorkshire; how much has already been claimed by local authorities in south Yorkshire; and how much is yet to gain approval for projects in south Yorkshire.

Mr. Sainsbury: South Yorkshire has been allocated approximately £180 million from the European regional development fund and the European social fund for the period 1989-93.

Projects have so far been approved to the value of £150 million, nearly half of which has been for projects undertaken by local authorities.

Nuclear Industry

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on discussions he has had with *(a)* Nuclear Electric and *(b)* British Nuclear Fuels over the transfer of liabilities for nuclear waste and decommissioning costs arising from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel at Sellafield.

Mr. Eggar: I meet Nuclear Electric and British Nuclear Fuels regularly to discuss a range of issues.

Crown Post Offices

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many Crown post offices there were in *(a)* Pendle and *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England for each year since 1987.

Mr. McLoughlin: The numbers of Crown post offices in Pendle, in Lancashire and in the United Kingdom for each year since 1987 were as follows:

	Pendle	Lancashire	United Kingdom
1987-88	3	23	1,499
1988-89	3	23	1,493
1989-90	3	20	1,339
1990-91	1	17	1,167
1991-92	1	16	1,019
1992-93	1	15	917
October 1992	1	14	881

The numbers of Crown post offices in England in these years could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Nuclear Materials (Exports)

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 21 October, *Official Report,* column *303,* if he will list the intergovernmental nuclear co-operation agreements which facilitate the export of nuclear materials.

Mr. Eggar: The United Kingdom has concluded bilateral intergovernmental nuclear co-operation agreement with Australia, Belgium, Chile, China, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. These agreements have been laid before the House and published in the treaty series.

North Korea

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the report made by the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the United Nations general assembly on ths attempts by the agency to complete nuclear safeguards arrangements with North Korea, pursuant to obligations under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Mr. Eggar: The United Kingdom commends the IAEA for its efforts to implement safeguards in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In this connection we fully support the report of the Director General to the United Nations General Assembly and approve the report's emphasis on the need for full nuclear transparency. We urge the DPRK to act on the concerns expressed in the report and comply fully with its IAEA safeguards agreement immediately, and confirm its commitment to the non-proliferation treaty permanently.

Refuse-to-Energy Plant, Belvedere

Mr. Evennett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) if he has received the inspector's report in respect of the public inquiry dealing with the proposed Cory refuse-to-energy plant in Belvedere;

(2) when he expects to be able to make a statement on the proposed Cory refuse-to-energy plant in Belvedere.

Mr. Eggar: My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade received the inspector's report yesterday.

My right hon. Friend will give timely and careful consideration to the report and will announce his decision on the application at the earliest possible opportunity after having considered the report.

Northern Region

Mr. Devlin: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment he has made of the state of the economy in the Northern region.

Mr. Eggar: The economy of the Northern Region has undergone a transition over the last decade and now has a broader manufacturing base. This process has been helped substantially by overseas investment worth some £2 billion.

A regional survey of business confidence compiled and published by the Northern Development Company recorded high levels of business confidence throughout the Northern region during the third quarter of 1993 with levels of investment, turnover and profit all continuing to rise.

Company Law

Mr. Morgan: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what assessment he has made of the implications of the European Court of Justice decision Penete Corni and others *v.* Administrazione dello Finanzo Dello Stato and others ref C-71/91 and C-179/81 upon the options for changing the operation and role of Companies house including *(a)* full privatisation, *(b)* partial privatisation and *(c)* contracting out some of the activities of Companies house;

(2) what consultations he has had about the effect of the ruling by the European Court of Justice in Ponente Corni and Others *v* Administrazione dello Finanzo Dello Stato and others ref. C-71/91 and C-179/81, on charging a registration fee to companies in excess of the actual cost of procedure; what representations he has had on this matter; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: I am studying the judgment of the European Court of Justice on these cases. I have not received any representations and there has been no consultation with outside bodies.

Forged Stamps

Mr. Hain: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what warnings have been issued by the Post Office and the Government about the sale of forged stamps in private retail outlets.

Mr. McLoughlin: This is an operational matter for the Post Office, but I understand that the Post Office issued no warnings because it judged that the attendant publicity would cause unnecessary panic and also prejudice investigations. The investigations have led to the arrest of 24 people in the London area.

Mr. Hain: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what estimate he has made of the impact on Post Office revenue of recent stamp forgeries.

Mr. McLoughlin: This is an operational matter for the Post Office, but I understand that recent sampling of mail at major sorting offices in London indicates that the loss of revenue is unlikely to exceed £1 million, or less than 0·03 per cent. of total annual revenue in 1992-93.

Konver Programme

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the membership of the national committee co-ordinating the Konver programme, together with the organisation each represents.

Mr. Sainsbury: I expect to take a decision shortly on which bodies should be invited to nominate a representative to serve on the national Konver programme monitoring committee.

Office of Telecommunications

Mr. Stephen: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what changes he has to announce to the cash limit and gross running costs limit for the Office of Telecommunications.

Mr. McLoughlin: Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the cash limit for class IV, vote 10, Office of Telecommunications, will be increased by £223,000 from £8,233,000 to £8,456,000.

The gross running costs limit for the Office of Telecommunications will also be increased by £223,000 from £7,861,000 to £8,084,000. The increase will enable the Office of Telecommunications to pay for personnel services provided by DTI in full. There is also a take-up of the end-year flexibility entitlement (£50,000) as announced by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 July 1993 at columns 512-517.

The increase will be offset by additional VAT refunds of £60,000, by a transfer from DTI (class IV, vote 1) a charge to the reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Departmental Offices

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the future of 1-19 Victoria street.

Mr. Eggar: The Department of Trade and Industry and Property Holdings have concluded an agreement with Legal and General Property for the refurbishment of 1-19 Victoria street for reoccupation by DTI as its headquarters building.

Work on site will start shortly and will take approximately 27 months.

When DTI returns to 1-19 Victoria street, it will give up Ashdown house—the building at 123 Victoria street—and other central London buildings, which account for considerably more space than 1-19 Victoria street.

Warship Yards

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the date of future meetings arranged between himself and Commissioner van Miert to discuss intervention funding for warship yards.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* There is no date arranged at the moment; Vice President van Miert is currently in Japan. I shall be speaking to him by telephone on his return and will meet with him thereafter as necessary.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what were the results of his meeting with Commissioner Van Miert on intervention funding for warship yards on 25 October; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The negotiations which took place on 25 October between my officials and officials in the EC Commission were useful and constructive. I will continue to maintain a close interest in this issue.

Post Office

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the return on capital employed in the Post Office in 1992-93; and what is that projected for 1993-94.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The financial targets set for Royal Mail and Post Office Counters are to achieve respectively an annual average return on capital employed of 16 per cent. and 9·3 per cent. over the three years 1992-93 to 1994-95. In 1992-93 the actual returns on capital employed achieved by Royal Mail and Post Office Counters were respectively 16·3 per cent. and 9·6 per cent.

Parcelforce was set the financial target of achieving at least break-even in 1992-93 and 1993-94. In 1992-93, Parcelforce incurred a small loss, giving a negative return on capital employed of −5·7 per cent.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was *(a)* the planned and *(b)* the outturn expenditure on capital investment in the Post Office in 1992-93; what was the planned capital investment in 1993-94 in last year's autumn statement; what is that currently planned; and if he will express the figures for 1993-94 both in cash and on a common price base with 1992-93.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* Planned capital expenditure by the Post Office in 1992-93 was £344 million; outturn expenditure was £343 million. The Post Office's capital expenditure limit for 1993-94 set in last year's autumn statement was £321 million and remains at that figure; in 1992-93 prices this equates to £312 million.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the external financing limit targets for the Post Office for 1992-93 and 1993-94 in cash and standard price terms.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The EFL targets set for the Post Office for 1992-93 and 1993-94 are as follows:

£ million

	Cash	*1992-93 prices*
1992-93	[1]−66	−66
1993-94	−181	−176

[1] The EFL outturn for 1992-93 was —£80 million.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the direct actual and whole-time equivalent employment in the Post Office and each of its subsidiaries as at 1 April 1992, 1 October 1992, 1 April 1993 and 1 October 1993.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The direct actual and whole-time equivalent employment in the Post Office and each of its subsidiaries as at 1 April 1992, 1 October 1992, 1 April 1993 and 1 October 1993 were as follows:

	Post Office	*Post Office Counters Ltd*	*SSL Ltd*	*Total Post Office group*
Direct Actual				
1 April 1992	191,800	16,900	1,400	210,100
1 October 1992	189,100	16,800	1,400	207,300
1 April 1993	184,600	16,400	1,400	202,400
1 October 1993	183,900	15,100	1,300	200,300
Wholetime equivalent				
1 April 1992	181,700	15,400	1,400	198,500
1 October 1992	178,900	15,100	1,400	195,400
1 April 1993	174,300	14,700	1,400	190,300
1 October 1993	173,100	13,400	1,300	187,800

Note: The above figures are to the nearest hundred. Direct actual employment represents all full-time staff plus part-time staff counted as 1; whole-time equivalent employment represents all full-time staff plus part-time staff counted as ½.

British Approvals Board for Telecommunications

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the membership of the British Approvals Board for Telecommunications together with their date of appointment, remuneration and other allowances, other public appointments and directorships.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The British Approvals Board for Telecommunications (BABT) is a private company without share capital, limited by guarantee. As a registered company, it is required to lodge a copy of its audited accounts and directors' details with Companies House. These show that the composition of the board (emoluments during 1992, if any, follow in brackets) is: the chairman (£8,500), the managing director and secretary (£62,304), the finance director (less than £5,000) and eight non-executive directors.

Their details are given as follows:

Name	*Position*	*Date Appointed*	*Other Directorships*
Mr. K. F. Whittle CBE	Chairman	30 June 1993[1]	Chairman BEAB
Mr. J. Pearcy	Financial	30 June 1993[1]	Director BEAB
Mr. G. D. Clarke	Managing Director and Secretary	1 January 1987	Director, Surrey TEC
Mr. J. F. Barrett	Director	24 November 1992	Director, Digital Equipment UK
Mr. R. P. Boardman	Director	30 June 1993[1]	
Mr. K. E. Clarke	Director	7 August 1992	Director, BT (CPB) Ltd.
Mr. D. G. Hyde	Director	11 October 1990	Oftel, (Nominated by Secretary of State)
Mr. H. Peltor CBE	Director	17 January 1991	Director, BREMA, Director, BEAB
Mr. N. A. Perrin	Director	1 January 1988	Director, EEA
Dr. D. A. Leakey	Director	1 June 1989	
Dr. A. O'Dochartaigh	Director	17 January 1991	Director of Communication-Bass plc

[1] Date of re-election.

Public Rights

Dr. Wright: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will publish a table showing whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests of each executive non-departmental public body for which his Department is responsible.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* A list of executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) sponsored by my Department is set out in "Public Bodies 1992" a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

With one exception, none of the executive NDPBs sponsored by DTI is required by statute to give the public rights to attend all board of committee meetings, inspect the minutes of meetings or inspect a register of members interests. The exception in the National Consumer Council which is required under company law to file details of members' interests.

The following NDPBs are either required by statute to publish their annual report or lay them before Parliament:

Advisory Committees on Telecommunications
Area Transport Users' Consultative Committees
British Hallmarking Council*
Central Transport Consultative Committee
Domestic Coal Consumers' Council
English Industrial Estates Corporation*
Gas Consumers' Council
London Regional Passengers' Committee
National Consumer Council*
Policyholders' Protection Board*
Post Office Users' National Council
Post Office Users' Councils for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority*

The bodies marked with an asterisk, together with the Hearing Aid Council, are also either required to publish their annual accounts or lay them before Parliament.

Refrigerant Containers

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what representations he has received from the British Aerosol Manufacturers Association about the terms of the draft Environmental Protection (Non-Refillable Refrigerant Containers) Regulations 1993.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* My Department has received representations from BAMA expressing concern that aerosol sprays for freezing purposes would be banned under the terms of these Regulations. I understand from my colleagues at the Department of the Environment that the regulation was not designed to include aerosols and the definitions have been revised to ensure that the regulation affects only refrigerants in disposable containers which are supplied for servicing refrigeration equipment.

Royal Mail International

Mr. Hain: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what percentage of Royal Mail International traffic is classified as concessionary printed paper rate—under 100 g; and if he will make a statement concerning its withdrawal.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* Concessionary printed paper rate items weighing less than 100 g represent 2·5 per cent. of total Royal Mail International traffic volume. The recent tariff changes for international printed paper traffic were necessary to ensure that the prices properly reflect the costs of providing the service.

Electrical Installations

Mr. Riddick: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his Department intends to introduce regulations requiring electrical installations affected by BS7671, IEE wiring regulations, to be installed by registered contractors in a manner similar to that used for gas installations under the Confederation of Registered Gas Installers registered contractor scheme.

Mr. Baldry: I have been asked to reply.

Electric wiring is already controlled through the Electricity Supply Regulations 1988, as amended in 1990, and the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. I am also considering the desirability of incorporating relevant electric wiring work into the Building Regulations, but the Government have no proposals to require all electrical installations to be installed by registered contractors.

Cash Limits

Mr. Carrington: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what changes will be made to his Department's cash limits and running costs limit for 1993-94.

Mr. Heseltine *[pursuant to the reply, 1 November 1993, c. 58]:* The Department's gross running cost limit as shown in table 2 of the original Estimate booklet (HC 495-IV) was overstated by £566,000 and should have been £327,424,000 as shown on the face of the Estimate for class IV, vote 1 at subheads C1 and CZ(6). The increase of £875,000 from £327,424,000 to £328,299,000 sought in the Winter Supplementary remains unchanged.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Integrated Education

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how he proposes to offer opportunities for integrated education; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ancram: The Government remain committed to maximising the opportunities for parents to opt for integrated schools for their children. Support and advice is available from the NI Council for Integrated Education to any group from the community who wish to establish an integrated school, with the Integrated Education Fund providing assistance with early capital costs. The Department of Education provides 100 per cent. recurrent funding for new schools from day one, and 100 per cent. capital grants as soon as a school's viability is confirmed. These measures have enabled rapid growth in the number of integrated schools: there are now 21 schools with a combined enrolment of some 4,000 pupils.

Commercial and Industrial Development

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on commercial and industrial development in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Atkins: After law and order, strengthening the economy is the second highest priority of the Government in Northern Ireland. Our economic development strategy aims to achieve higher levels of employment opportunities. This depends on Northern Ireland industry becoming internationally competitive and the economic development agencies have been working towards this aim by encouraging inward investment and by helping with activities which will improve business performance.

The annual report of the Industrial Development Board (IDB), published in September, recorded a year of considerable achievement for the organisation. There were 10 new inward investment projects offering almost 2,000 new jobs—IDB's second most successful year ever. Several of these projects, including Texmaco and Seagate Technology, will not only create employment but also introduce new products and technologies to Northern Ireland. In addition 2,800 new jobs were created during 1992-93 in IDB client companies which received financial assistance towards investment projects in 59 established companies with the aim of improving their international competitiveness.

The Local Enterprise Development Unit (LEDU), the small business agency, also had a successful year in 1992-93. During the year there was a net increase in employment of 1,020 in LEDU client companies, a significant reversal of the previous year's results which showed a net decrease in employment of 650. There was also a marked rise in activity levels across the range of LEDU's activities, including 3,716 individuals receiving enterprise training and 1,429 new business start ups.

During 1992-93 the Industrial Research and Technology Unit (IRTU) played a significant role in the development of Northern Ireland's research and development capabilities through the provision of a range of financial and other support to industry. Particular emphasis was placed on encouraging collaboration between industry, government and other organisations engaged in research.

Development in the commercial sector continues to be buoyant and numerous projects have been started or completed in the last year. Major projects completed include developments in Belfast such as a 10-screen multiplex cinema and associated multi-storey car park, and a number of significant office developments including a major development in the Laganside area, which will be a priority area for commercial development over the next 15 years. In Londonderry a £10 million development known as Quayside has recently been completed. Projects currently under way in Belfast include further development of sites within Laganside, together with prestige office developments on other sites. In Londonderry work has started on a £65 million retail and office development to be known as Foyleside.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in what way journey times by ambulance between Larne and the new Antrim hospitals have been recorded; and what is the estimated journey time by ambulance for patients between Larne and the Antrim hospital.

Mr. Ancram: The Northern health and social services board has carried out "trial runs" using three different methods, to calculate the travel time from Larne to the Antrim hospital site.

The first method involved an ambulance travelling at high speed on a normal day but without the use of the emergency blue light. The recorded time was 20 minutes. The second method involved travelling by car at normal speed and on a normal day. The time recorded was 25 minutes. The third method involved using a computer model which simulated a journey by ambulance in poor travel conditions. The time calculated was also 25 minutes.

The board estimates that in a real emergency, even in rush-hour traffic, the journey could be completed by ambulance in approximately 20 minutes. In normal traffic conditions a reduction of three of four minutes in that time would be possible.

Religious Tolerance

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to encourage religious tolerance in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Ancram: The Government are committed to ensuring that there is full equality of opportunity and equity of treatment for all sections of the Northern Ireland community and that every opportunity is taken to encourage greater contact between the communities, thereby increasing mutual understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity. Over the past four years the Government have facilitated a wide range of measures to encourage better community relations and has committed more than £23 million towards community relations programmes in Northern Ireland, including over £7 million in this financial year. From September 1993 all pupils of compulsory school age are required to be taught two cross-community themes—education for mutual understanding, and cultural heritage—which are intended to foster greater understanding and improved relationships between people of different cultural traditions.

Democratic Structures

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to develop further democratic structures in Northern Ireland.

Sir Patrick Mayhew: The Government would like to see greater responsibility for the affairs of Northern Ireland exercised by locally elected representatives, under a system attracting wide support across the entire community. I continue to believe that the best hope of achieving this lies in the talks process involving the British and Irish Governments and the four main constitutional parties in Northern Ireland. The Government are actively engaged in discussions aimed at taking this process forward.

Community Psychiatric Nurses

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of the level of knowledge, skill and experience of community psychiatric nurses in promoting and maintaining mental health in the community in deciding whether to include them as eligible as approved applicants for compulsory admission to a psychiatric hospital in the proposed amendments to the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

Mr. Ancram: There are no proposals at present to amend the substance of the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and no consideration is currently being given to include community psychiatric nurses as persons who may make application for assessment under the compulsory admission to hospital procedures contained in the order.

Official Hospitality

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to his answer of 20 October, *Official Report*, column *235*, if he will state the reason for the increase in entertainment costs in his Department from 1991-92 to 1992-93.

Sir John Wheeler: The previously published figures on hospitality in 1991-92 related only to the Department of Finance and Personnel. The total amount spent on official hospitality in that year by all the Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office was £559,220.

Out-of-school Child Care

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what department in Northern Ireland is to be responsible for the allocation of the out-of-school grants as agreed by the Department of Employment; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will publish the amount of money to be made available to Northern Ireland for child care provision under the out-of-school child care grant; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: It is not always possible for grants available from GB Departments to be immediately replicated by Northern Ireland Departments. The out-of-school child care grant has not been extended to Northern Ireland. The possibility of introducing a scheme of this kind is currently being examined by an inter-departmental group which will advise Ministers. If it is decided that a scheme is feasible or can be funded, then a decision will be made about assigning departmental responsibility for it.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what provision is made for grants to those organisations and individuals who organise out-of-school arrangements in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: In the health and personal social services field, funding of local day care projects is the responsibility of the four area health and social services boards. These projects are aimed at looking after children who might be at risk of being harmed or becoming delinquent. Support

can be provided on a once only basis towards a project's start-up costs and for equipment, and on a recurring basis towards annual running costs. In addition, the Department of Health and Social Services can support the central administrative expenditure of regional voluntary child care organisations whose work advances, the Department's strategic objectives.

Security Statistics

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the security statistics for 1992 are now available, together with details of persons charged with terrorist-type offences and convictions for scheduled offences for the year.

Sir John Wheeler: Security statistics for 1992 are as follows. Statistics for earlier years can be obtained from the Library.

Statistics on security for the period January to December 1992

Contents		*Page number*
Table 1:	a. Shooting incidents	1
	b. Explosions-estimated weight	1
	c. Bombs neutralised-estimated weight	1
	d. Armed robberies	1
	e. Amount stolen	1
	f. Malicious fires	1
	g. Deaths	1
	h. Injuries	1
Table 2:	a. (i) Dwellings searched by the Army	2
	a. (ii) Dwellings searched by the RUC	2
	b. Finds	2
	c. Persons charged with terrorist-type offences	2
Table 3:	Tables of convictions and sentences for scheduled offences	3-5

Table 1: statistics of terrorist activity

	Figures
a. Shooting incidents[1]	439
b. Explosions	222
Estimated weight in kilograms	7,207
c. Bombs neutralised	149
Estimated weight in kilograms	4,143
d. Armed robberies	642
e. Amount stolen	£1,665,863
f. Malicious fires	419
g. Deaths:	
Civilian	76
Regular Army	4
Royal Irish Regiment	2
RUC	2
RUC Reserve	1
Total	85
f. Injuries:	
Civilian	598
Regular Army	302
Royal Irish Regiment	18
RUC	123
RUC Reserve	25
Total	1,066

[1] Excludes shots heard.

Table 2: Statistics of security forces activity

	Figures
a. (i) Dwellings searched by the Army:	
Occupied	507
Unoccupied	129
Derelict	115
TOTAL	751
a. (ii) Dwellings searched by the RUC:	
Occupied[1]	—
Unoccupied[1]	—
Derelict[1]	—
TOTAL	3,415
b. Finds:	
Weapons	243
Ammunition (rounds of)	29,131
Explosives (weight in Kgs)	2,166
c. Persons charged with terrorist-type offences:	
Murder	34
Attempted murder	63
Firearms offences	79
Explosives offences	38
Armed robbery	32
Others	159
TOTAL	405

[1] Breakdown into occupied, unoccupied or derelict not provided by the RUC.

Note: Searches of dwellings frequently involve both the Army and the RUC and are registered in their respective records. The totals should therefore not be aggregated and are shown separately to avoid an element of double counting.

Table 3
Convictions and sentences for scheduled offences tried on indictment at Belfast Crown Court 1992

Offences	*Persons convicted*	*Non-custodial sentence*	*Young offenders centre/ training school*	*Custodial sentences (January-December 1992)* *Less than 5 years*	*5 years and less than 7 years*	*7 years and less than 10 years*	*10 years and less than 15 years*	*15 years and less than 20 years*	*20 years and over*	*Detained S.O.S.*	*Life*
Murder	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Aiding and abetting murder	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Attempted murder	7	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	0	0
Conspiracy to murder	9	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	3	0	0
Assault[1]	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	8	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wounding or grievous bodily harm with intent	18	2	5	1	3	5	2	0	0	0	0

Offences	Persons convicted	Non-custodial sentence	Young offenders centre/ training school	Custodial sentences (January-December 1992) Less than 5 years	5 years and less than 7 years	7 years and less than 10 years	10 years and less than 15 years	15 years and less than 20 years	20 years and over	Detained S.O.S.	Life
Wounding or grievous bodily harm with intent	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kidnapping and false imprisonment	4	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Arson	12	8	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Petrol bomb offences	7	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hijacking	19	8	4	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robbery	120	34	21	33	16	8	8	0	0	0	0
Burglary (aggravated)	10	4	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Blackmail	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Impeding apprehension	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Membership	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possessing items for terrorist purposes	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Causing a bomb hoax	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Withholding information	4	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recording information	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of information useful to terrorists	8	3	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Making property available	13	5	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Withholding information about an arrestable offence	18	17	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carrying firearm with intent	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of firearm and ammunition in suspicious circumstances	6	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of firearm with intent	27	6	2	7	3	4	3	1	1	0	0
Explosives offences	24	2	2	0	4	5	8	2	1	0	0
Intimidation	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Threats to kill	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Handling[1]	4	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theft[1]	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Breach of suspended sentence	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Making or receiving contributions	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	354	131	37	73	37	26	26	6	8	0	10

Notes:

1. Non-scheduled offences ([1]) are included in table 3 where a defendant and/or co-defendants were charged with scheduled offences, and where the charge was 'reduced' (e.g. from robbery to handling stolen goods), or where a defendant pleaded guilty to a lesser charge.
2. Breach of suspended sentences are included where the orders were made on scheduled offences. They are also included where the breach of conditions for non-scheduled offences are heard along with other scheduled offences.
3. Where a person has been convicted of more than one offence, only that offence which received the longest sentence is recorded in the statistics.

Authorised Investigators

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects the statutory code of practice in respect of authorised investigators to come into operation.

Sir Patrick Mayhew: Yesterday I laid before Parliament the draft code of practice in connection with the exercise by authorised investigators of the powers conferred by schedule 5 of the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1991, as I am required to do by paragraph 7(3) of that schedule. I intend also to make an Order which will bring the code into operation from midnight on 31 December 1993. This short delay is to enable authorised investigators and those who may have to advise persons to be interviewed by them to acquaint themselves with the provisions of the draft code before it comes into operation.

The draft code provides guidance to authorised investigators on how they should exercise their powers and contains a number of valuable stafeguards for those who may be interviewed by them.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Chamber (Live Feed)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will list all those organisations and individuals *(a)* within and *(b)* outside the precincts of the Palace of Westminster who currently receive the live feed from the Chamber of the House of Commons.

Mr. Newton: Within the Palace of Westminster and its outbuildings, the following organisations or individuals receive a clean television feed from the Chamber: Madam Speaker; the Speaker's Secretary; the Chairman of Ways and Means; the Prime Minister; the Leader of the Opposition; the Leader of the House; the shadow Leader of the House; the Leader of the Liberal Democrats; the Whips Offices of the Government, the Official Opposition and the Liberal Democrats; the Supervisor of Parliamentary Broadcasting; and the Press Gallery, within which some individual broadcasters have made their own separate arrangements.

In addition, the Votes and Proceedings Office and the Committee Office at No. 7 Millbank receive a clean sound feed. The Editor and Deputy Editor of the *Official Report* enjoy a similar facility, as does the *Hansard* training division at No. 7 Millbank.

Outside the House, a number of Government Departments have arranged through the Central Office of Information to take a clean television feed. In addition, all the main broadcasters within the United Kingdom—the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, and BSkyB—are entitled under the terms of the first report of Session 1988-89 of the Select Committee on Televising of Proceedings of the House to receive the clean feed. The live feed is also retransmitted in the form of the Parliamentary Channel, which is carried by various local cable networks throughout the United Kingdom. Finally, the Press Association has access to a live feed for the production of still photographs, for which purpose it has been licensed by Parliamentary Broadcasting Unit Ltd., PARBUL.

There are a further 25 organisations, mainly in broadcasting or the press, which are already authorised to take a clean sound feed and which on the basis of a policy decision by the Select Committee, are also entitled, without the need to seek separate permission, to take a clean television feed if they wish. I understand that very few of these organisations have in fact exercised their right to receive the television feed, although precise information about their identity is not readily available since, as indicated, they do not need the approval of the Select Committee to do so. The full list of 25 is as follows:

British Forces Broadcasting Service
Manx Radio
South Africa Broadcasting Corporation
National Public Radio (USA)
Radio stations affiliated to the National Association of Hospital Broadcasting Organisations
Scandinavian Broadcasting (Danish (DR), Finnish (YLE), Norwegian and Swedish radio and television)
Voice of America
Falkland Islands Broadcasting
Associated Press Ltd.
IBS News Ltd.
Radio Television Hong Kong
Radio Basildon
London Broadcasting Co. Ltd. (who are authorised to supply the feed to national newspapers)
Israel Broadcasting Authority
Norddeutscher Rundfunk Hamburg
Westdeutscher Rundfunk Köln
Deutsche Welle, Köln
Wall Street Journal London Bureau
Reuters Ltd.
Sound Productions (Overseas Promotions) Ltd.
TV Asahi
Christian Science Monitor
Tolerate Europe/Gulf
Bank of England
New York Times London Bureau

The supply of a clean sound feed has also been authorised to BBC Audiocall, TIM Ltd. and IRN for the purpose of providing a premium rate live telephone relay of proceedings.

Sittings of the House

Mr. Allen: To ask the Lord President of the Council what progress he has made in preparing proposals for the House on the hours of sitting arising from the report from the Select Committee on Sittings of the House.

Mr. Newton: I have met the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) since the House reassembled to consider how best we might make further progress in taking forward the proposals from the report.

EC Visits

Mr. Allen: To ask the Lord President of the Council how many hon. Members used the new facility in the last financial year to visit Brussels or Strasbourg on parliamentary business.

Mr. Newton: During the financial year ended 31 March 1993, a total of 88 Members claimed expenses under the terms of the Resolution of the House of 6 December 1991, in respect of visits to European Community institutions.

Sixty-one Members claimed for a visit to Brussels, 26 for a visit to Strasbourg and one for a visit to Luxembourg.

Members' Rooms

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chairman of the Accommodation and Works Committee how many hon. Members have single rooms *(a)* in total and *(b)* by party.

Mr. Ray Powell: Four hundred and forty-five hon. Members have single rooms as follows: 243 Conservatives, 185 Labour, 10 Liberal Democrats, 2 Scottish National party, 2 Ulster Unionist party, 2 Plaid Cymru, 1 Ulster Popular Unionist party. These figures include office holders' rooms.

Receptions

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee how many receptions have taken place at the House sponsored by *(a)* Conservative hon. Members and *(b)* hon. Members of other parties since 9 April 1992; and for what organisations in each case.

Mr. Colin Shepherd: It is not the practice to disclose details of bookings made by Members.

Catering Facilities

Mr. Cox: To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee, pursuant to his reply to the hon. Member for Barnsley, Central (Mr. Illsley), of 22 October, *Official Report*, columns 347-8, if he will seek to arrange for the impending review of private dining facilities to consider a requirement that hon. Members sponsoring functions in the House should confirm to the Director of Catering Services that they have checked the bona fides of any organisation for which they have agreed to sponsor a function.

Mr. Colin Shepherd: The impending review of private dining facilities will include consideration of the existing regulations.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Gambling

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what were the revenues raised from, and the total turnover of, gambling and gaming, including pools, gaming machines, bingo, casinos, on-course betting, off-course betting and lotteries in each year since 1989; and what is his Department's analysis of the changes in these statistics.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Information relating to the revenue raised from betting and gaming is contained in tables J1-J3 of the annual reports of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, copies of which are in the Library.

Reliable information on total turnover from the various forms of betting and gaming is not collected centrally.

Prisoners

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answer of 27 October, *Official Report,* column *640,* if he will break down into categories the 51 per cent. of all prisoners in Britain not convicted of violence against the person, robbery or for a sexual offence.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Mr. David Alton, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question pursuant to my Answer of 27 October, asking for a breakdown into categories of the 51 per cent. of all prisoners convicted of non-violent offences i.e. offences other than violence against the person, robbery or sexual offences.

The information you have requested is given in the attached table.

Population[1] held in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales under sentence on 30 June 1993

Offence Group	*Percentage of the sentenced prison population*
Burglary	16
Theft and handling	10
Fraud and forgery	3
Drugs	11
Other offences	11
All non-violent offences	51

[1]Provisional figures. Excludes those committed in default of payment of a fine and those for whom no offence is recorded.

Overseas Domestic Servants

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new measures Her Majesty's Government are proposing in order to prevent abuse and exploitation of domestic servants from overseas.

Mr. Charles Wardle: We introduced in May 1991 tighter controls on the arrangements whereby in certain circumstances domestic servants from abroad may accompany their employer to the United Kingdom.

These arrangements are kept under review but there are no plans at present to introduce further measures.

British Summer Time

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future of British summer time.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: We expect to bring our consideration of policy on future summer time arrangements to a conclusion soon. We shall take into account the possible outcomes of negotiations on the recent draft 7th EC directive on the start and end dates of summer time, including its proposal that from 1997 all member states should adopt the October end date currently used in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Police Cautions

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police cautions were issued each year since 1990 in the Peterlee sub-division.

Mr. Maclean: Information collected centrally shows only the police force area in which a caution is given. The table gives cautioning data for the Durham constabulary for 1990 to 1992—which is provisional. 1993 information will not be available until autumn 1994.

Number of offenders cautioned in Durham police force area by type of offence 1990, 1991 and 1992[1]

Type of offence	*1990*	*1991*	*[1]1992*
Indictable	1,235	1,152	1,377
Summary (excluding motoring)	766	704	688
Total	2,001	1,856	2,065

[1]Provisional.

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what additional resources will be made available to the police service as a whole, and for each police force area, to implement the draft circular on cautioning;

(2) how many additional police officers he estimates will be needed to implement the draft circular on cautioning;

(3) what additional resources will be made available to the Crown Prosecution Service to implement the draft circular on cautioning;

(4) what will be the cost to the legal aid budget of the draft circular on cautioning;

(5) what is his estimate of the additional workload for the Crown Prosecution Service of his draft circular on cautioning;

(6) what is his estimate of the additional workload for the police service as a whole, and for each police force, of his draft circular on cautioning;

(7) how many extra staff he estimates will be needed by the Crown Prosecution Service to implement the draft circular on cautioning.

Mr. Maclean: The resource implications of the new draft guidance are still being examined while consultation is in progress, but since it is not expected to do more than return the number of cautions to the level that was current in 1991, I do not expect significant additional resources to be required.

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what is his estimate of the impact on the average length of time from charge or summons to completion of a case in the youth court of his announcement on cautioning;

(2) what is his estimate of the number of additional prosecutions which will result from his draft guidance on cautioning;

(3) what is his estimate of the impact on the average length of time from first appearance of a case in a youth court to completion of his announcement on cautioning;

(4) what is his estimate of the number of additional cases that will be dealt with *(a)* in the youth court, *(b)* in magistrates courts and *(c)* in the Crown court as a result of his draft circular on cautioning.

Mr. Maclean: Responsibility for deciding whether or not to caution an offender in any particular case will

continue to rest with the police who will make their own judgments as to what action it would be appropriate to take in particular circumstances. But we have estimated that the effect of the guidance which has just been issued for consultation might be to increase the number of prosecutions by some 25,000 to 30,000. The vast majority of these cases would be heard in the youth court or magistrates courts; it is too soon to estimate reliably the effect, if any, on court waiting times.

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what is the average length of time from offence to the administering of a police caution nationally and in each police force area;

(2) what is the average cost of a caution.

Mr. Maclean: This information is not available.

Falklands War Crimes

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what expenditure has hitherto been incurred in investigating the alleged war crimes by British soldiers in the Falklands; and what estimate he has for the cost of the total investigation.

Mr. Charles Wardle: I understand from the commissioner that the estimated additional cost of the investigation to date is £98,000 and that future additional costs are estimated at £3,800 per month.

Vehicle Security

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he is taking to ensure the introduction of secure and visible vehicle identification numbers to improve vehicle security.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The Home Office and the police have for some years been encouraging motor manufacturers to introduce visible vehicle identification numbers on all new cars.

This is preferably done by the number being displayed on a permament tamper-proof plate bonded to the nearside windscreen pillar or dashboard of the vehicle, and I am pleased to say that a number of manufacturers are now responding positively to our representations.

Fines (Defaulters)

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of prisoners have been imprisoned for defaulting on payment of fines.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Mr. David Alton, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the percentage of prisoners imprisoned for defaulting on a fine in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales.

The latest available provisional information is for 31 August 1993 when fine defaulters accounted for some 1·5 per cent. of the total sentenced prison population.

Mrs. Joy Gardner

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library a copy of the INDECS record of Mrs. Joy Gardner.

Mr. Charles Wardle: No. It is not our practice to make public immigration records relating to individuals.

Category A Prisoners

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will provide estimates for the annual cost of imprisoning a category A prisoner for each year since 1974.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Mr. Chris Mullin, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question concerning the annual cost of holding category A prisoners, since 1974.

Costs are collected by the type of establishment, rather than the category of prisoner.

All convicted category A prisoners are held in one of six dispersal prisons. The average annual cost of holding an inmate in a dispersal prison (at 1993-94 prices) is given for the years 1983-84 to 1992-93. Prior to 1983 the dispersal prisons were not costed separately.

Average annual cost (at 1993-94 prices) of holding a prisoner in a dispersal prison

Year	£
1983-84	42,010
1984-85	40,435
1985-86	37,279
1986-87	35,885
1987-88	40,570
1988-89	36,730
1989-90	35,294
1990-91	36,333
1991-92	44,627
1992-93	[1]43,599

[1] Provisional.

Dispersal prisons hold all categories of inmates and we are unable to isolate those costs which relate directly to the category A prisoners.

Birmingham Pub Bombings

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will call for reports from the appropriate chief constable to provide estimates for the cost including police wages of *(a)* the inquiry by Mr. David Owen into the injuries inflicted on the six people convicted of the Birmingham pub bombings during the first few days in custody, *(b)* the inquiry carried out by the City of London police in 1988 into alleged contacts between Dr. Frank Skuse and Mr. George Reade, *(c)* the first inquiry conducted by the Devon and Cornwall police into the pub bombings convictions and *(d)* the second inquiry conducted by the Devon and Cornwall police.

Mr. Charles Wardle: No. These are matters for the chief constable of the West Midlands police.

Wymott Prison

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to implement the recommendations made in the report of Her Majesty's chief inspector of prisons on the disturbance at Her Majesty's prison, Wymott.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Mr. Doug Hoyle, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the plans to implement the recommendations made in the report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons on the disturbance at Wymott prison. The report makes a total of 47 recommendations. Whilst some of these recommendations are specific to Wymott there are others concerning the management of Category C prisoners and the handling of major incidents. At this stage 42 of the Chief Inspector's recommendations have been accepted or accepted in principle, whilst the remaining five recommendations are currently being evaluated. Several of the accepted recommendations have already been implemented.

The recommendations still under evaluation are:

Recommendation 7.03, that the Certified Normal Accommodation for each house at Wymott should be reduced to make them more manageable;

Recommendation 7.23, 7.24 and 7.25, which concern themselves with general management and tactical management issues for the Category C prisoner population;

and *Recommendation 7.29,* which proposes measures to not hold active drug dealers in establishments with cubicular or dormitory accommodation.

This overall response to the Chief Inspector's Report effectively constitutes a broad programme of action to establish and maintain safety at Wymott. The outcome of the evaluation of the wider recommendations contained in 7.23, 7.24, 7.25 and 7.29 should contribute further to this both at Wymott and in other establishments, whilst the local recommendations for a reduction in house unit Certified Normal Accommodation will be considered in the light of proper experience of the establishment's new vulnerable prisoner population.

The timetable for implementation of this overall response to the Chief Inspector's Report will vary in accordance with the implications and demands of particular individual recommendations. Several of the local recommendations and those for the handling of major incidents have already been implemented. A decision has now been taken to demolish the two most severely damaged house units at Wymott and to replace this accommodation with new cellular blocks similar to those recently opened at the establishment in your own constituency, HM Prison Risley. This building programme will take somewhere in the region of 2 years to complete. Consideration still needs to be given to some of the broader issues concerning the Category C prisoner population, as the Chief Inspector's recommendations have a number of implications for other principles and regime priorities such as the Prison Service's desire to develop community prisons on the lines proposed in the Woolf report. Detailed work will be required to formulate a proper response which effectively balances these varying demands.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what plans he has to continue the sex offender treatment programme for prisoners sent to Her Majesty's prison, Wymott;

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact on individual prisoners' progress through the sex offender treatment programme as a result of their compulsory transfer from Her Majesty's prison, Wymott.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Questions about the sex offender treatment programme at Wymott.

No prisoner who has participated in the sex offender treatment programme at Risley prison has been moved to Wymott on a compulsory basis, although four prisoners who had completed the formal treatment have so far chosen to go there on voluntary transfer. Staff from Risley have to date undertaken the necessary post-course assessment of these prisoners. It is intended that any similar further requirements in these cases will at this stage be primarily maintained from Risley.

At this time and for the immediately forseeable future, Risley is maintaining its existing programme for this form of group work. Wymott intends to start similar initiatives early in the new year. No prisoner who has started this kind of course at Risley, either at the present time or in the future, would be considered for any transfer to Wymott until they had completed their course. Any prisoner selected for future attendance on a course at Risley would only be transferred to Wymott if a suitable course place was available in the latter setting.

Once this form of groupwork has become fully established at Wymott the two establishments will work together on arrangements for the post-course assessment and support of all prisoners who have completed the formal treatment programme. This will ensure that a consistent level of care and assessment of progress is maintained for all the individual prisoners concerned.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what decision he has come to on the conclusion of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons regarding the safety of the accommodation at HMP Wymott; and on what basis the accommodation has been certified for use by prisoners.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the safety of the accommodation at Wymott prison, and on what basis the accommodation has been certified for use by prisoners.

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons' Report into the Disturbance at HM Prison Wymott on 6 September 1993 makes a total of 47 recommendations. Whilst some of these recommendations are specific to Wymott there are others concerning the management of Category C prisoners and the handling of major incidents. Many of this broader range of recommendations also have implications for safety at Wymott. At this stage 42 of the Chief Inspector's recommendations have been accepted or accepted in principle, whilst the remaining five are currently being evaluated. Several of the accepted recommendations have already been implemented.

The recommendations still under evaluation are:

Recommendation 7.03, that the Certified Normal Accommodation for each house at Wymott should be reduced to make them more manageable;

Recommendation 7.23, 7.24 and 7.25, which concern themselves with general management and tactical management issues for the Category C prisoner population;

Recommendation 7.29, which proposes measures to not hold active drug dealers in establishments with cubicular or dormitory accommodation.

This overall response to the Chief Inspector's Report effectively constitutes a broad programme of action to establish and maintain safety at Wymott. The outcome of the evaluation of the wider recommendations contained in 7.23, 7.24, 7.25 and 7.29 should contribute further to this both at Wymott and in other establishments, whilst the local recommendations for a reduction in house unit Certified Normal Accommodation will be considered in the light of proper experience of the establishment's

new vulnerable prisoner population. This total response must be considered as part of the context for decisions now taken about the continuing and future use of accommodation at Wymott. These measures also in themselves contribute significantly to the maintenance and promotion of a safe environment for prisoners within this establishment.

The Chief Inspector's Report makes two particular recommendations about the existing accommodation at Wymott:

Recommendation 7.01, that the houses at Wymott should be redesigned and rebuilt or strengthened and converted to locked cellular accommodation; and

Recommendation 7.02, that integral sanitation and an emergency call bell system should be installed throughout following the conversion to locked cellular accommodation.

A decision has now been taken to demolish the two most severely damaged units (C and D Houses) and to replace this accommodation with cellular accommodation with integral sanitation and an emergency call bell system. The long term future of the remaining A and B Houses is being reviewed, and decisions on this should be reached in the early part of 1994.

At this stage, however, work is well underway for the full refurbishment of these houses and the division of their existing 24 place accommodation units in half. The Chief Inspector's proposed means of creating cellular accommodation with integral sanitation within the refurbished house units were noted. This would involve difficult technical issues for the services supplied to the buildings, and is not considered to be essential.

The implementation of several of the Chief Inspector's other recommendations, the further division of the existing accommodation units and changes already made to the daytime regime, night routines and the frequency of staff patrols together contribute significantly to the safety of Wymott's prisoner living areas. Such small cubicular accommodation with its access to night time sanitation is comparable with that found in several other establishments within the estate. This accommodation at Wymott has been certified for use in accordance with normal requirements of Section 14 of the Prison Act 1952 and Rule 23 of the Prison Rules 1964.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vulnerable prisoners are now held at Wymott prison.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated October 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about vulnerable prisoners at Wymott prison.

On 2 November 1993, 129 vulnerable prisoners were located at Her Majesty's Prison Wymott.

Police White Paper

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a list of the organisations and individuals who have responded to or commented on the police White Paper; and if he will place a copy of each comment and submission in the Library.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Since the White Paper on police reform was published on 28 June, representations have been received from the 263 organisations set out in the following list. In addition, 95 letters have been received from individuals in response to the proposals.

An additional 91 letters have been received from organisations and individuals in response to the specific proposals set out in the White Paper about possible adjustments to the boundaries of the Metropolitan police.

Some organisations who have written may already have published their comments. But those commenting were not warned that their names or comments might be published and I do not therefore think it right to name private individuals who have written, or to place copies of any of the letters in the Library.

List of Organisations from whom responses to the White Paper on police reform have been received

Alnwick District Council
Arun District Council
Assembly of Welsh Counties
Association of Metropolitan Authorities
Association of County Councils
Avon and Somerset police authority
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Bedfordshire Constabulary
Bedfordshire police authority
Bedfordshire County Council
Belgrave Road local consultative committee
Bidford on Avon Parish Council
Blyth Valley Borough Council
Bournemouth Town Council
Bournville Lane police local consultative committee
Bradford on Avon and District Crime Prevention Panel
Brecknock police liaison Committee
Brentwood Borough Council
Bridlington police community liaison committee
Bridlington Crime Prevention Panel
Brighton Borough Council
British Transport Police Federation
Broadbury and Bishopsworth police and community consultative group
Cambridgeshire police authority
Camden Community and police consultative group
Carmathen District Council
Cheshire police authority
Cheshire County Council
Chester-le-Street district council
Chester-le-Street police community consultative group
Chesterfield Borough Council
Chiltern District Council
Christchurch Borough Council
Chute Parish Council
Clwyd County Council
Commission for Racial Equality
Conservative Party West Midlands Area
Coventry City Council
Craven District Council
Crigglestone Parish Council
Cumbria police authority
Dalton le Dale Parish Council
Darlington police community consultative group
Denby Dale Parish Council
Derbyshire County Council
Derwentside police community consultative group
Devon and Cornwall police authority
Dinefwr Borough
Dorset County Council
Durham police community consultative group
Durham County Council
Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils
Dyfed Powys police authority
Easington police community consultative group
East Lindsey District Council
East Sussex County Council
East Birmingham Pensioners
Eastbourne Borough Council
Ecclesfield community and police liaison forum
Epping Town Council
Epping Forest District Council
Essex police authority
Featherstone Town Council
Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
Gloucestershire police authority
Gloucestershire County Council
Great Grimsby Borough Council
Greater Manchester police authority
Greater Manchester Superintendents' Association
Gwent police authority
Hampshire Superintendents' Association
Harrow Police and Community Consultative Group

Hart District Council
Hastings and St. Leonards police community consultative group
Hastings Borough Council
Healeyfield Parish Council
Hebden Royd Town Council
Hereford and Worcester County Council
Hertfordshire police authority
Hertfordshire Police Federation joint branch board
Hertfordshire Magistrates' Courts Committee
Hertsmere Borough Council
Hornsea Crime Prevention panel
Hove Borough Council
Hull Chamber of Commerce and Shipping
Humberside police authority
Ilkley Parish Council
Isle of Anglesey Borough Council
Isle of Wight County Council
Kennet District Council
Kent police authority
Kirkburton Parish Council
Kirklees Magistrates' Courts Committee
Lancashire County
Ledsham Parish Council
Leeds City Council
Leicestershire police authority
Lewes police community consultative group
Lichfield Police and Community Consultative Group
Lincolnshire police authority
Little Clacton Parish Council
Macclesfield District Council
Mere Parish Council
Merseyside police authority
Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale
Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham
Metropolitan Borough of Sefton
Mid-Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
Montgomeryshire police liaison committee
National Associaton of Local Councils
Neath Borough Council
Netherlands State Police
Norfolk County Council
Norfolk police authority
North Yorkshire Branch of the Association of District Councils
North Eastern Regional District Councils Association
North Wiltshire District Council
North Staffordshire police consultative committee
North Yorkshire police authority
North Wales police authority
North Wiltshire District Council
Northampton Borough Council
Northamptonshire police authority
Northern Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
Northumberland County Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottinghamshire police authority
Odiham Parish Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Pelton Fell village action group
Police Federation of England and Wales
Police Superintendents' Association
Port Talbot Borough Council
Radnorshire police liaison committee
Radwinter Parish Council
Redditch Borough Council
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Rotherham Chamber of Trade
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Ryhill Parish Council
Scarcroft Parish Council
Seaham Town Council
Seaton with Slingley Parish Council
Sharleston Parish Council
Sheffield City Council
Shropshire County Council
Shropshire Association of Parish and Town Councils
Skipsea Parish Council
Slough Borough Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Somerset County Council
South Yorkshire Constabulary
South Yorkshire police authority
South Kesteven District Council
South Tyneside Metropolitan Council
South Trafford police community consultative group
Southwater Parish Council
Spelthorne Borough Council
St. Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
St. Ive Parish Council
Staffordshire police authority
Staffordshire County Council
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Staffordshire Superintendents' Association
Steeton-with-Eastburn Parish Council
Suffolk police authority
Suffolk County Council
Sunderland City Council
Surrey County Council
Sussex police authority
Sutton Borough Council
Sutton Benger Parish Council
Teesdale police and community consultative group
Thames Valley police authority
Thamesdown Racial Equality Council
Todmorden Town Council
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Walkers Heath and District Residents' Association
Warwickshire County Council
Warwickshire police authority
Watford Council
Wednesbury police consultative committee
Welwyn Hatfield Council
West Bretton Parish Council
West Midlands police consultative committee (F Division)
West Yorkshire police authority
West Lindsey District Council
West Mercia police authority
West Midlands police authority
West Bretton Parish Council
Wetherby Town Council
Wickersley Parish Council
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Wiltshire police authority
Woodspring District Council
Wootton Bassett Town Council
Worthing Police Community Consultative Group
Worthing Borough Council
Worthing police community consultative group
Wythenshawe police and community consultative group
Wythenshawe Homewatch Committee
Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Association

Juvenile Offenders

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what was the number and percentage of cases dealt with at first appearance at the juvenile court and subsequently youth court for each of the last five years *(a)* in England and Wales and *(b)* in each region for England and Wales;

(2) what was the average length of time from offence to charge or summons for juveniles in each of the last five years *(a)* in England and Wales and *(b)* in each region of England and Wales;

(3) what was the average length of time from first appearance to completion of a case at the juvenile court and subsequently youth court for each of the last five years *(a)* in England and Wales and *(b)* in each region for England and Wales;

(4) what was the average length of time from charge or summons to first listing in the juvenile and subsequently youth court for each of the last five years *(a)* in England and Wales and *(b)* in each region for England and Wales.

Mr. Maclean: The readily available information, which is collected in selected sample weeks in February, June and

October of each year for indictable offences—including either way—is given in the table. Information from the 1993 samples will be available in early 1994.

Average time taken for indictable proceedings[1] in juvenile courts[2] by stage of proceedings and area, 1989 to 1992

Drugs/percentage

Area/year	*Average number of days from*					
	Offence to charge or summons	*Charge or summons to first listing*	*First listing to completion*	*Offence to completion*	*Percentage completed on first listing*	*Numbers of defendants in sample*
London						
1989	42	18	68	128	13	363
1990	44	19	87	150	10	326
1991	45	19	76	141	11	292
1992	54	18	66	137	20	323
Other Metropolitan districts						
1989	42	21	60	123	16	543
1990	48	20	75	143	13	582
1991	42	21	73	136	13	610
1992	44	20	72	135	13	651
Non-Metropolitan Counties						
1989	55	25	58	137	17	1,054
1990	50	24	55	130	15	998
1991	53	25	61	139	17	895
1992	43	24	57	123	15	1,028
England and Wales						
1989	49	22	60	132	16	1,960
1990	49	22	67	138	13	1,906
1991	48	23	67	138	15	1,797
1992	45	22	63	129	15	2,002

[1] Based on all indictable proceedings completed in sample weeks in February, June and October of each year.
[2] Youth courts from 1 October 1992.

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to set targets for completion of each stage of the criminal justice process from offence to caution or completion of the court case in relation to juvenile offenders.

Mr. Maclean: Following implementation of recommendations from the pre-trial issues working group, a number of such targets applying to the court process are already in place for adults as well as juveniles. In addition, there are statutory limits governing the length of time that defendants can be held in custody while on remand. I do not intend to set time limits for the issuing of cautions.

Burglaries

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many burglaries in the 12 months ended June 1993 *(a)* in England and Wales and *(b)* in each police force area in England and Wales were (i) burglary of a home and (ii) other burglaries.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is given in the table.

Notifiable offences of burglary recorded by the police by police force area—12 months ending June 1993

England and Wales

Police force area	*Burglary in a dwelling*	*Burglary in a building other than a dwelling*
Avon and Somerset	24,095	21,293
Bedfordshire	7,256	8,806
Cambridgeshire	7,571	8,706
Cheshire	10,929	12,241
Cleveland	12,426	7,159
Cumbria	4,922	7,032
Derbyshire	9,456	15,212
Devon and Cornwall	14,608	16,689
Dorset	5,859	4,350
Durham	7,618	6,422
Essex	10,325	16,809
Gloucestershire	8,936	8,861
Greater Manchester	66,263	38,361
Hampshire	16,865	18,854
Hertfordshire	5,627	7,788
Humberside	18,789	27,636
Kent	19,423	12,288
Lancashire	18,823	11,526
Leicestershire	14,046	11,324
Lincolnshire	6,697	5,535
City of London	33	803
Merseyside	23,018	12,395
Metropolitan police district	124,732	63,063
Norfolk	6,340	12,178
Northamptonshire	6,788	6,670
Northumbria	31,652	32,833
North Yorkshire	7,551	9,047
Nottinghamshire	22,322	17,760
South Yorkshire	23,274	25,594
Staffordshire	13,562	17,257
Suffolk	3,879	5,615
Surrey	6,025	7,322
Sussex	15,849	14,054
Thames Valley	21,520	17,928
Warwickshire	4,417	8,794
West Mercia	8,340	9,847
West Midlands	53,960	50,717
West Yorkshire	56,624	37,812
Wiltshire	4,492	4,832
England	724,912	621,453

Police force area	Burglary in a dwelling	Burglary in a building other than a dwelling
Dwfed-Powys	1,584	3,297
Gwent	3,639	4,083
North Wales	4,210	8,270
South Wales	14,844	24,726
Wales	24,277	40,376
England and Wales	749,189	661,829

Disclosure Requirements

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proposals he has to cut the amount of police time and time of civilian employees of police authorities to meet requirements of disclosure while allowing the necessary access on behalf of defendants.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend is considering the recommendations of the Royal Commission on criminal justice for simplifying the obligations for disclosure and reducing the burdens on the police. Any new provisions must be workable and fair.

Prison, Doncaster

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the levels of overcrowding on which tenders for the new prison at Doncaster have been invited.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated November 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about levels of overcrowding at Her Majesty's Prison Doncaster. The Invitation to Tender stated that, in accordance with the current procedures for opening new prisons, it was not envisaged that Her Majesty's Prison would be overcrowed.

In recognition of the population pressure, however, and of the importance of having the value of competitive pressure in setting performance outputs and prices, all tenderers have subsequently been asked for their proposals for operating the prison at above the Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) figure, including the impact on regime offerded on prisoner care.

Courts

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* indictable offences, *(b)* summary motoring offences and *(c)* summary non-motoring offences were dealt with in the magistrates courts in each years since 1980 and in the last year for which figures are available;

(2) how many *(a)* indictable offences, *(b)* summary motoring offences and *(c)* summary non-motoring offences were dealt with by the juvenile court and latterly by the youth court in each year since 1980 and in the last month available.

Mr. Maclean: Readily available information on the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts by age group and type of offence is published annually in the Command Paper "Criminal statistics England and Wales". Table 6.1 of the 1990 and 1991 editions refers. Copies of these publications are available in the Library. 1992 data—which are provisional—are given in the table. 1993 data will not be available until autumn 1994.

England and Wales 1992[1]

(Thousands)

Type of offence	Persons aged 10 and under 17	All defendants
Indictable	35	490
Summary non-motoring	11	601
Summary motoring	3	938
Total	49	2,030

[1] Provisional.

Prosecution Costs

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the average cost of a prosecution *(a)* in the magistrates courts, *(b)* in the youth court and *(c)* in the Crown court.

Mr. Maclean: Comparative information on the costs of proceedings for either way offences in the magistrates and Crown court was included in "Costs of the Criminal Justice Systems 1992", published in December 1992 under section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991. No separate data are available in respect of the youth court.

Fire and Rescue Services

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will detail the standard spending assessment and planned budget for each fire and rescue service during the current financial year.

Mr. Howard: Standard spending assessments relate to fire and civil defence expenditure; and the table provides the information requested on that basis.

(£ million)

	1993-94 Fire and Civil Defence SSA	1993-94 Fire and Civil Defence budgeted spending
County Fire Authority		
Avon	20.473	21.829
Bedfordshire	11.073	11.780
Berkshire	16.601	15.798
Buckinghamshire	12.360	12.318
Cambridgeshire	12.039	13.795
Cheshire	20.103	21.002
Cleveland	19.464	20.128
Cornwall	7.181	10.146
Cumbria	8.753	11.813
Derbyshire	17.067	18.272
Devon	19.557	22.240
Dorset	12.065	13.748
Durham	12.973	13.914
East Sussex	14.891	16.600
Essex	31.445	34.667
Gloucestershire	9.605	10.285
Hampshire	31.585	27.823
Hereford and Worcester	12.116	12.025
Hertfordshire	20.328	19.547
Kent	2.229	3.396
Humberside	21.322	22.168
Isle of Wight	30.998	35.138

	1993-94 Fire and Civil Defence SSA	1993-94 Fire and Civil Defence budgeted spending
Lancashire	32·276	33·320
Leicestershire	16·924	14·878
Lincolnshire	9·583	11·641
Norfolk	13·010	14·999
Northamptonshire	11·260	11·460
Northumberland	5·823	8·433
North Yorkshire	12·001	14·718
Nottinghamshire	21·087	20·784
Oxfordshire	11·284	11·326
Shropshire	7·839	8·040
Somerset	7·693	9·349
Staffordshire	19·345	18·577
Suffolk	11·023	12·770
Surrey	22·133	26·288
Warwickshire	8·993	11·574
West Sussex	14·836	16·122
Wiltshire	10·054	10·267
Isles of Scilly	0·053	0·088
Fire and Civil Defence Authority		
London	247·910	247·749
Greater Manchester	72·754	70·516
Merseyside	48·327	47·429
South Yorkshire	29·683	30·104
Tyne and Wear	35·357	33·803
West Midlands	69·070	66·728
West Yorkshire	50·752	52·392

Note: The SSAs shown for county fire authorities take no account of capital financing costs.

Police Authority Budgets

Dr. Marek: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are for an increase in police authority budgets for policing costs in the second half of 1993-94.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Police authorities will have taken account of the level of Government support for policing when setting their budgets for 1993-94. Any changes to these budgets would be a matter for the local authorities concerned.

Car Crime

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing *(a)* for England and Wales and *(b)* for each police force area in England and Wales for the 12 months ended June 1993 (i) the total number of car crimes, (ii) the number of thefts from a vehicle and (iii) the number of thefts of vehicles.

Mr. Maclean: The requested information is given in the table.

Notifiable offences of vehicle crime recorded by the police by police force area—12 months ending June 1993

England and Wales

Police force area	Total vehicle crime	Theft from a vehicle	Theft of a vehicle
Avon and Somerset	67,561	39,896	27,665
Bedfordshire	20,860	11,954	8,906
Cambridgeshire	19,190	12,538	6,652
Cheshire	23,795	14,247	9,548
Cleveland	23,953	10,632	13,321
Cumbria	12,310	9,033	3,277
Derbyshire	27,111	17,358	9,753
Devon and Cornwall	33,298	24,483	8,815
Dorset	12,741	8,893	3,848
Durham	18,702	9,341	9,361
Essex	31,549	20,092	11,457
Gloucestershire	19,483	14,916	4,567
Greater Manchester	119,051	59,865	59,186
Hampshire	40,362	29,566	10,796
Hertfordshire	18,871	12,476	6,395
Humberside	32,424	21,207	11,217
Kent	45,658	26,001	19,657
Lancashire	37,968	24,430	13,538
Leicestershire	30,509	18,439	12,070
Lincolnshire	11,110	7,354	3,756
City of London	1,023	888	135
Merseyside	34,577	18,252	16,325
Metropolitan police district	243,218	163,650	79,568
Norfolk	18,455	13,559	4,896
Northamptonshire	15,778	9,085	6,693
Northumbria	56,538	26,125	30,413
North Yorkshire	14,086	9,342	4,744
Nottinghamshire	43,666	26,331	17,335
South Yorkshire	44,889	24,101	20,788
Staffordshire	29,511	17,436	12,075
Suffolk	9,194	6,528	2,666
Surrey	15,512	10,614	4,898
Sussex	31,656	22,855	8,801
Thames Valley	64,820	41,793	23,027
Warwickshire	14,435	9,200	5,235
West Mercia	22,641	14,176	8,465
West Midlands	96,889	55,530	41,359
West Yorkshire	89,446	51,204	38,242
Wiltshire	9,984	7,026	2,958
England	1,502,824	920,416	582,408
Dyfed-Powys	4,466	3,098	1,368
Gwent	10,392	6,563	3,829
North Wales	12,622	9,002	3,620
South Wales	54,131	30,796	23,335
Wales	81,611	49,459	32,152
England and Wales	1,584,435	969,875	614,560

Prisons Ombudsman

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the post of prisons ombudsman to be readvertised; which personnel recruitment agencies were asked to tender for the contract to head-hunt potential candidates for post; and what is the anticipated cost of *(a)* advertising and *(b)* headhunting for the post.

Mr. Howard: The post of prisons ombudsman is being readvertised in the national press in the period 4 to 11 November 1993.

Three firms were invited to tender for the contract to headhunt: Coopers and Lybrand Executive Resourcing Ltd., Goddard Kay Rogers and Associates Ltd. and SSI.

The anticipated cost of advertising is £12,500. I am not able to provide details of the amount charged by the appointed headhunter since this information must be treated as commercial-in-confidence.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date interviews were held for the post of prisons ombudsman; on what date the unsuccessful candidates were informed of the outcome; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Howard: Interviews for the post of prisons ombudsman were held on 21 June 1993.

Unsuccessful candidates were informed of the outcome on 2 August and on 10 September 1993.

The post is now being readvertised.

Youth Organisations (Funding)

Ms Armstrong: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the level of grant in aid for all youth bodies in the United Kingdom for the last five years; and what plans there are for the funding of these organisations over the next five years.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Information listing grants made by each Government Department directly to voluntary organisations, and showing the broad area of work for which the grant was given, is available for 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92. Copies of these lists are in the Library of the House. Prior to 1989-90 this information was not collected centrally.

It is not possible to say what the level of funding of voluntary organisations will be over the next five years.

INFORM

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what further grants he intends to make to INFORM, the information network focus on new religious movements.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Funding was originally provided to INFORM for a period of three years from 1987. This was extended for a further three years in 1990. Given competing bids for assistance from other voluntary sector groups, and the pressures on public expenditure generally, the Government have decided not to provide any additional funding for INFORM beyond the existing provision. Nor do the Government intend to fund any other groups working in this field.

Smart, Pegg, Doody and Pierson

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 27 July, *Official Report,* columns *863-65,* if he will make a further statement about his proposals for implementing the House of Lords judgment of 24 June in the case of Smart, Pegg, Doody and Pierson.

Mr. Howard: The judgment is concerned with the disclosure to prisoners serving mandatory life sentences of information about the minimum period of custody that they will be required to serve in order to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence. Inter alia, it requires that the prisoner should be told the gist of the judicial advice which the Secretary of State receives on this subject, the Secretary of State's decision and the reasons for any departure from the judicial view.

In my reply to my hon. and learned Friend on 27 July, I announced that I was consulting the Lord Chief Justice about the precise way in which the judgment would be implemented in respect of those prisoners who had already been sentenced. Those consultations have now been completed. Disclosure of the matters required by the judgment has already been given to four prisoners immediately affected by the judgment and to another four, in respect of whom there were extant judicial review proceedings.

Following this consultation, I propose now to commence a programme of disclosure to all mandatory life sentence prisoners. There are two categories of such prisoners. First, there are approximately 100 prisoners who were sentenced either shortly before, or after, the House of Lords judgment, for whom a minimum period of detention has not yet been considered by a Minister. In accordance with my previous answer, they will, as soon as is practicable, be informed of the relevant judicial recommendations in their cases so that they may, if they wish, submit written representations before that period is set. Any such representations will be considered by me or by a Minister acting on my behalf; and the prisoner will be informed of the decision with reasons for any departure from the judicial view.

Secondly, there is a much larger number of some 2,600 prisoners whose cases have already been considered by Ministers, often some years ago, and who have already been notified of the date when their case would be first reviewed by the local review committee prior to consideration by the Parole Board. My officials will now begin the process of disclosure to them of the gist of the relevant judicial recommendations and advice, and of the decision by the Secretary of State of the day as to the minimum period which must be served for retribution and deterrence together, in appropriate cases, with a statement of the reasons why a recommendation from the judiciary was not followed. These prisoners will also be able to submit written representations. They will be considered and a response will be provided.

It will inevitably take some time to clear the "backlog" of cases represented by this second group, given the limited resources available in my Department for the task. Taking account of the need to consider and respond to prisoners' representations, it will probably be some 12 months before every mandatory life sentence prisoner has been considered. Priority will be given to prisoners who have first local review committee dates in the calendar years 1994 to 1996 inclusive, in the order of those dates. In fairness to all, and to ensure maximum efficiency, cases will not normally be taken out of turn.

Political Violence (Wales)

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will now set up an independent inquiry into the activities of an agent provocateur in cases of alleged political violence in Wales in the late 1960s; and if he will make a statement on the recent acknowledgement by a retired special branch officer of the existence of such an agent.

Mr. Howard *[holding answer 22 October 1993]:* I have asked for a report from the North Wales police on the interview to which the hon. Member refers and shall write to him once I have considered it.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Low Incomes

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people live on income below the appropriate benefit level for their circumstances.

Mr. Burt: The latest estimates for the take-up of income-related benefits are for 1989 and show that there were around 2.2 million people who were eligible for income support, housing benefit or family credit who had not claimed. Many of these would have been eligible only for small amounts of the relevant benefit.

National Insurance

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will update the answer of 4 December 1992, *Official Report*, column *421-22* on national insurance rebates for personal pensions, giving estimates for 1994-95 in addition to earlier years.

Mr. Hague: The information is in the tables.

Table 1

Tax year	*National insurance fund income (£ million)*	*Percentage*
1988-89	29,825	1·1
1989-90	30,446	8·5
1990-91	34,490	6·3
1991-92	34,679	7·4
1992-93	35,660	7·7

Table 2

Tax year	*Estimated national insurance fund income (£ million)*	*Percentage*
1993-94	44,357	6·4
1994-95	45,353	4·4

Note. The projected fall in percentage for 1994-95 is due to the drop in the rebate from 5·8 per cent. to 4·8 per cent. from April 1993, the ending of the 2 per cent. incentive payment from April 1993 and the onset of the 1 per cent. additional rebate for personal pension holders aged 30 or over from April 1993. These changes are not reflected in the amounts paid out of the National Insurance fund until 1994-95 year.

Housing Payments, Scotland

Mr. George Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list for each new town corporation in Scotland and Scottish Homes, for each available year since 1987-88 *(a)* the number of tenancies in their stock, *(b)* the number of these tenants in receipt of rent rebate, *(c)* the number of tenants in receipt of rent rebate as a percentage of the overall number of tenants, *(d)* the total amount of housing benefit expenditure, *(e)* the numbers and amounts of housing benefit overpayments and the amount as a percentage of the overall housing benefit expenditure, *(f)* the numbers and amounts of housing benefit backdated awards under Regulation 72(15) and the amount paid as a percentage of the overall housing benefit expenditure and *(g)* the numbers and amounts of discretionary payments under Exceptional Circumstances Regulation 69(8) and their percentage in relation to total housing benefit expenditure.

Mr. Burt: The available information is in the tables.

Housing benefit in new towns in Scotland and Scottish Homes
(a) Number of occupied tenancies

	1988-89	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Cumbernauld (DC)	7,222	6,684	5,957	5,516	4,979
East Kilbride (DC)	12,818	11,320	10,467	10,516	9,769
Glenrothes (DC)	6,820	6,285	5,914	5,604	5,384
Irvine (DC)	4,214	4,006	3,818	3,774	3,724
Livingston (DC)	8,854	8,107	7,849	7,599	7,351
Scottish Homes	[1]—	66,860	64,306	60,496	57,253
Total	[2]—	103,262	98,311	93,505	88,460

(b) Number of cases in receipt of rent rebate

	1988-89	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Cumbernauld (DC)	3,900	3,800	3,500	3,400	3,300
East Kilbride (DC)	6,000	5,900	5,300	5,200	5,200
Glenrothes (DC)	3,500	3,300	3,200	3,200	3,200
Irvine (DC)	2,000	2,000	1,900	1,900	1,900
Livingston (DC)	3,900	3,800	3,500	3,600	3,600
Scottish Homes	[1]—	34,800	33,500	37,400	36,300
Total	[2]—	53,600	50,900	54,700	53,500

(c) Percentage in receipt of rent rebate

Per cent.

	1988-89	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Cumbernauld (DC)	54	57	59	62	66
East Kilbride (DC)	47	52	51	49	53
Glenrothes (DC)	51	53	54	57	59

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Irvine (DC)	47	50	50	50	51
Livingston (DC)	44	47	45	47	49
Scottish Homes	[1]—	52	52	62	63
Total	[2]—	52	52	58	60

(d) Total Housing Benefit expenditure (£)

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Cumbernauld (DC)	3,386,708	3,562,957	3,616,865	3,798,328	4,173,769
East Kilbride (DC)	4,437,371	4,666,748	4,972,683	5,535,231	6,405,684
Glenrothes (DC)	2,924,230	3,078,029	3,220,484	3,578,474	4,137,078
Irvine (DC)	1,707,373	1,815,819	1,879,451	2,055,093	2,362,064
Livingston (DC)	3,449,244	3,619,755	3,740,551	4,249,920	4,999,275
Scottish Homes	[1]—	34,141,686	37,288,386	41,853,626	(+)45,752,720
Total	[2]—	50,884,994	54,718,420	61,070,672	22,077,870

(e) Number of cases of overpayment

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Cumbernauld (DC)	5	7	118	77	85
East Kilbride (DC)	85	48	42	258	611
Glenrothes (DC)	373	391	432	627	1,805
Irvine (DC)	519	1,262	838	636	379
Livingston (DC)	10	77	82	57	90
Scottish Homes	[1]—	6,390	4,217	4,632	[2]—
Total	[2]—	8,175	5,729	6,287	[2]—

(e) Amount of overpayment (£)

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Cumbernauld (DC)	1,802	1,090	42,432	18,391	18,102
East Kilbride (DC)	11,894	16,854	13,491	39,461	70,959
Glenrothes (DC)	26,793	22,958	27,017	42,635	104,544
Irvine (DC)	29,161	64,332	38,648	42,959	17,094
Livingstone (DC)	3,609	27,156	22,529	17,606	27,405
Scottish Homes	[1]—	1,098,802	956,231	953,108	[2]—
Total	[2]—	1,231,192	1,100,348	1,114,160	[2]—

(e) Overpayment as percentage of total expenditure

	1988-89 Per cent.	1989-90 Per cent.	1990-91 Per cent.	1991-92 Per cent.	1992-93 Per cent.
Cumbernauld (DC)	0·05	0·03	1·17	0·48	0·43
East Kilbride (DC)	0·27	0·36	0·27	0·71	1·11
Glenrothes (DC)	0·92	0·75	0·84	1·19	2·53
Irvine (DC)	1·71	3·54	2·06	2·09	0·72
Livingston (DC)	0·10	0·75	0·60	0·41	0·55
Scottish Homes	[1]—	3·22	2·56	2·28	[2]—
Total	[2]—	2·42	2·01	1·82	[2]—

(f) Number of cases of backdated payment

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Cumbernauld (DC)	16	20	13	30	36
East Kilbride (DC)	0	0	0	0	5
Glenrothes (DC)	0	0	2	2	3
Irvine (DC)	18	25	35	30	32
Livingston (DC)	5	6	16	12	19
Scottish Homes	[1]—	263	211	194	[2]—

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Total	[2]—	314	277	268	[2]—

(f) Amount of backdated benefit (£)

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Cumbernauld (DC)	4,320	6,293	2,646	11,576	15,159
East Kilbride (DC)	0	0	0	0	371
Glenrothes (DC)	0	0	376	584	1,670
Irvine (DC)	2,216	2,147	3,822	7,767	4,386
Livingston (DC)	1,048	1,612	4,572	3,467	5,053
Scottish Homes	[1]—	50,819	37,872	40,864	[2]—
Total	[2]—	60,871	49,288	64,258	[2]—

(f) Backdated amount as percentage of total expenditure

Per cent.

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Cumbernauld (DC)	0·13	0·18	0·07	0·30	0·36
East Kilbride (DC)	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·01
Glenrothes (DC)	0·00	0·00	0·01	0·02	0·04
Irvine (DC)	0·13	0·12	0·20	0·38	0·19
Livingston (DC)	0·03	0·04	0·12	0·08	0·10
Scottish Homes	[1]—	0·15	0·10	0·10	[2]—
Total	[2]—	0·12	0·09	0·11	[2]—

(g) Amounts of discretionary payments (£)

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Cumbernauld (DC)	260	106	[2]—	305	0
East Kilbride (DC)	0	0	0	0	0
Glenrothes (DC)	*	0	0	0	893
Irvine (DC)	0	0	0	0	0
Livingston (DC)	0	0	0	0	0
Scottish Homes	[1]—	16,021	36,474	49,962	[2]—
Total	[2]—	16,127	[2]—	50,267	[2]—

(g) Discretionary amounts as percentage of total expenditure

	1988-89 Per cent.	1989-90 Per cent.	1990-91 Per cent.	1991-92 Per cent.	1992-93 Per cent.
Cumbernauld (DC)	0·01	0·00	[2]—	0·01	0·00
East Kilbride (DC)	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00
Glenrothes (DC)	[2]—	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·02
Irvine (DC)	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00
Livingston (DC)	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00
Scottish Homes	[1]—	0·05	0·10	0·12	[2]—
Total	[2]—	0·03	[2]—	0·08	[2]—

Notes:
[1] Indicates that Scottish Homes did not exist in 1988.
[2] Not available.
1. Scottish Homes figure for total expenditure in 1992-93 is from the mid-year estimate.
2. Information on the number of discretionary payments is not available.

Sources:
Tenancies: Scottish Office.
Cases: Housing Benefit Management Information System.
Expenditure: Final Subsidy claim forms.

Benefits

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will estimate the cost of indexation for all social security benefits in 1994-95; and what would be the net costs in addition to indexation of *(a)* raising all income-related benefits by 0·8 per cent., *(b)* raising all income-related benefits and the basic retirement pension by 0·8 per cent., *(c)* raising all benefits by 0·8 per cent., *(d)* giving all households on income support an extra £1 a week, *(e)* giving all households on income-related benefits

an extra £1 a week, *(f)* giving pensioners over 80 years of age on income support an extra £1 a week and *(g)* giving all households on income-related benefit and all retirement pensioners an extra £1 a week.

Mr. Hague: The information is in the table.

The costs in 1994-95 of increases to the income-related benefits and the basic state pension

(£ million pa, 1994-95)

Option	*Cost*
Full cost for all benefits of indexation in line with RPI/Rossi increases	1,820
(a) increase all income-related benefits (IRBs) by extra 0·8 per cent.	250
(b) increase all IRBs and RP/linked benefits by extra 0·8 per cent.	430
(c) increase all benefits by extra 0·8 per cent.	570
(d) increase IS personal allowances by £1 per week	410
(e) increase personal allowances in all IRBs by £1 per week	430
(f) increase IS higher pensioner premium by £1 per week	60
(g) increase all IRB personal allowances and RP/linked benefits by £1 per week	840

Notes:

1. All estimates are at 1994-95 levels. They are based upon results from the 1993-94 policy simulation model, and should therefore be regarded as provisional.
2. Changes to the basic state pension have also been applied to those benefits that are statutorily linked (invalidity and widows' benefits).
3. It is assumed that the current links between benefit rates in IS and other income-related benefits are maintained. Thus, changes to IS allowances and premia have been assumed to feed through into HB/CTB and, where appropriate, FC.
4. In part (f), an extra £1 has been given to IS cases aged 80 and above by means of an increase in the higher pension premium.
5. Where RP and linked benefits are increased by £1 per week, it is assumed that the related rates of category B pension and adult dependency increases rise by 60p per week.
6. RPI/Rossi upratings in April 1994 are assumed to be 1·8/3·5 per cent.

Post Office Fees

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will place a paper in the Library outlining the fee payment system to *(a)* sub-post offices and *(b)* the Post Office for benefit transactions, setting out all volume-related variable fees.

Mr. Hague: The system of fees to be paid by the Department of Social Security to Post Office Counters Limited for encashment of order books and other services in 1993-94 is still being negotiated.

In earlier years the fee has included a fixed charge; a variable charge to cover costs which vary with changes in volume; a financial charge to cover the costs of activities necessary to ensure the supply of adequate quantities of notes and coin to pay pensions and allowances and other outpayments; and a publicity charge relating to the cost of providing display of posters and leaflets.

The system for remunerating individual sub-post offices is a commercial agreement between Post Office Counters Ltd. and the National Federation of Sub-postmasters.

Index-linked Benefits

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the impact of a 1 per cent. rise in the retail prices index upon the cost of index-linked social security and unemployment benefits.

Mr. Hague: A total of £710 million in 1994-5.

Crisis Loans

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will give a breakdown of reasons for applications for crisis loans, including alignment payments based on the latest available information.

Mr. Scott: The administration of the social fund is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Ms Ann Coffey, dated 3 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency, it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking if he will give a breakdown of reasons for applications for crisis loans, including alignment payments based on the latest available information.

Statistical information about the reason for a Crisis Loan application is not held. I have, therefore, provided details of the number of Crisis Loans awarded nationally and the purpose of the award. The information is attached at Annex A for the period 1 April 1993 to 30 September 1993 (latest available data).

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Annex A

Number of crisis loan awards and reason for the award, 1 April 1993 to 30 September 1993 (latest available data)

Purpose of the award	*Number of awards*
Bed	13,235
Bedding	8,045
Clothing and footwear	4,879
Cooker	14,204
Floor covering	2,000
Home improvement and maintenance	472
Living expenses alignment	135,137
Living expenses general	165,901
Household items	20,467
Others	3,995
Removal expenses	1,122
Rent in advance	5,100
Travelling expenses	4,888
Washing machine	1,613
Total	381,058

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the average length of time he estimates for the administrative proceedings, including reception, social fund payment section, finance and social fund administrative recovery section, to be completed for an application for a crisis loan because of an alignment payment and the average length of time to administer a benefit payment.

Mr. Scott: The administration of the social fund is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Ms Ann Coffey, dated 3 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions raised about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking what is the average length of time he estimates for the administrative proceedings, including reception, social fund payment section, finance and social fund administrative recovery section, to be completed for an application for a crisis loan because of an alignment payment and the average length of time to administer a benefit payment.

Unfortunately, figures are not available which relate specifically to a Crisis Loan because of an "alignment payment". I can, however, give you figures for the administrative procedure you request for Crisis Loans in general:

	Minutes
Reception time	4·6
Time to process a Crisis Loan	88·4
Social Fund Loan Recovery and Transfer Action	59·9
Prepare and issue payment	4·0
Total time	156·9

I have given a figure for the time taken to prepare and issue a Crisis Loan payment, as it is part of the administrative procedures you are enquiring about. However, if you require details about the time taken to administer the payment of a specific benefit I would be happy to supply you with further information.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Benefits Agency

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans he has to increase the efficient use of staff time in the Benefits Agency.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Benefits Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Michael Bichard. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Ms Ann Coffey, dated 3 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency, it is my responsibility to answer questions raised about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question asking the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans he has to increase the efficient use of staff time in the Benefits Agency.

The Benefits Agency, as part of the Civil Service, is required to provide to Treasury improved efficiency of 2 per cent. each year. The savings are part of a rolling programme of efficiencies required under the Public Expenditure Survey.

With the introduction of new technology and other improvements in organisation, current measurement shows that, between 1989-90 and 1992-93, staff efficiency in respect of output improved by around 20 per cent.

The Benefits Agency seeks at all levels of the organisation improvements in service and efficiency through reviews of current methods and implementation of staff suggestions.

The Benefits Agency also has in place an Efficiency Review Unit responsible for seeking improvements in efficiency and achieving savings in administration costs.

As a result of the improvements in efficiency and working methods staff resources are more effectively used in delivering the service.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Channon: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what targets the Child Support Agency has set itself to ensure maintenance payments in cases of parents flouting any order made by the courts;

(2) what proportion of staff and resources of the Child Support Agency is being directed to the cases of parents who are already making maintenance payments as a result of a court order;

(3) how many cases of fathers not making any maintenance payments the Child Support Agency is pursuing; and if he will make a statement about its success in such cases.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the right hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ms R. Hepplewhite to Mr. Paul Channon, dated 4 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking a number of questions about the Agency's operations.

You ask about parents who fail to comply with orders made by the courts and action taken by the Agency where fathers fail to pay maintenance. I should explain that the Agency is concerned only with pursuing maintenance in those cases for which we have accepted responsibility under the take on arrangements which are being phased in over a period of four years. We will pursue all those cases where we have made an assessment and the absent parent has subsequently failed to pay maintenance. Individual cases where payments are not made timeously are identified for follow up action but information on payments and arrears for the Agency as a whole is not yet available in a form which can be summarised.

I am sorry that the precise information about previous court orders for which you ask is not available as the Child Support Computer System, upon which the work of the Agency is based, records the information which is relevant to the calculation of a maintenance assessment. Information on previous court orders is not therefore collected. Under the take on arrangements, we have already issued 527,000 Maintenance Application Forms and have made assessments in over 36,000 cases. Among those will be clients who already receive maintenance but we cannot separately identify what resources are applied specifically in such cases.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful but I hope you will find this explanation useful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the estimated reduction in expenditure on each social security benefit resulting from the operation of the Child Support Agency in 1993-94; and what proportion this represents, in total, of the maintenance payments resulting from the agency's assessments.

Mr. Burt: It is estimated that Child Support Agency operations in 1993-94 will reduce income support expenditure by £500 million. This includes an amount for parents with care who cease to claim income support due to maintenance related activity of the agency. Family credit and disability working allowance expenditure is estimated to reduce by £30 million.

The proportion of total maintenance assessed by the Child Support Agency which is estimated to be recovered through reduced benefit payments is 90 per cent.

Benefits, Lewisham

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people are registered as self-employed in the London borough of Lewisham; and what estimate he has of the number claiming *(a)* sickness benefit, *(b)* invalidity benefit, *(c)* severe disability allowance, *(d)* family credit and *(e)* housing benefit.

Mr. Hague: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Teenage Lone Parents

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 25 October, *Official Report*, column *504*, on what statistical analysis he has based his policy towards teenage lone parents claiming one-parent benefit; and if he will now make it his policy to collect details of the number of such parents.

Mr. Burt: One-parent benefit is an increase of child benefit which is available to all lone parents who fulfil the qualifying conditions, regardless of age. Statistical information on the ages of lone parent income support recipients is contained in the Annual Statistical Enquiry. In addition, further information on teenage lone parents is available through a number of surveys and research projects commissioned by the Department, but very detailed tabulations are not always available due to small sample sizes and prohibitive costs.

EDUCATION

Student Grants

Mr. Campbell-Savours: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what discussions he has had with the university vice chancellors on the level of student grants.

Mr. Boswell: My right hon. Friend and I last met the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals on Monday 25 October. We had a useful and interesting exchange of views on a number of current issues in higher education.

Sex Education

Mr. Thurnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what procedures are being adopted to monitor the numbers of parents exercising their right to withdraw their children from sex education lessons; to what extent these procedures will be based on the precedent created by the parental right of withdrawal of children from religious education; how many parents exercised this right in 1992 in relation to religious education; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Forth: My right hon. Friend will look to the Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED) to monitor and advise on the quality and effectiveness of sex education, as part of OFSTED's overall responsibilities for school inspections. We have no plans separately to monitor centrally the extent to which parents choose to withdraw their children from sex education. This information is not collected centrally in relation to religious education and collective worship.

Mr. Thurnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is the target date for the implementation of the parental right to withdraw children from sex education; what is the timetable for consultation on the departmental guidelines relating to sex education; which groups and individuals will be consulted; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Forth: The new arrangements for sex education introduced under section 241 of the Education Act 1993, including the parental right of withdrawal, will come into effect from the start of the autumn term 1994. We plan to issue detailed guidance to schools next spring about these arrangements, in the light of responses to the consultative draft which will issue shortly to local authority associations, local education authorities and other interested parties.

Discretionary Awards

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what was the annual expenditure or discretionary awards by each local education authority in 1978-79, 1990-91 and 1991-92 at current prices and at 1978-79 prices.

Mr. Boswell: Data on expenditure for the academic year 1978-79 for each local education authority are not held centrally. The earliest year for which data for each authority are available is 1983-84. The information for 1983-84, 1990-91 and 1991-92 is included in the table, which shows expenditure in both current prices for those years and also 1983-84 prices.

Expenditure on discretionary awards (£000 in current and 1983-84 prices[1])

	1983-84	*1990-91*		*1991-92*	
	Current prices	*Current prices*	*1983-84 prices*	*Current prices*	*1983-84 prices*
City of London	[1]—	205·9	139·1	25·5	16·0
Camden	—	n/a	n/a	746·9	469·9
Greenwich	—	353·7	239·0	770·4	484·8
Hackney	—	1,166·3	788·0	1,275·2	802·4
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	3,043·2	2,056·2	728·5	458·4
Islington	—	57·0	38·5	1,088·8	685·1
Kensington and Chelsea	—	452·9	306·0	683·7	430·2
Lambeth	—	984·7	665·3	572·5	360·2
Lewisham	—	808·2	5486·1	1,058·8	666·2
Southwark	—	709·1	479·1	795·2	500·4
Tower Hamlets	—	860·9	581·7	550·2	346·2
Wandsworth	—	3,676·5	2,484·1	[2]n/a	n/a
City of Westminster	—	244·0	164·9	1,221·2	768·4
ILEA/LRB[4]	13,637·4	6,254·8	4,226·2	—	—
Barking	231·0	248·5	167·9	453·8	285·6

	1983-84 Current prices	1990-91 Current prices	1983-84 prices	1991-92 Current prices	1983-84 prices
Barnet	788·6	497·5	336·1	866·3	545·1
Bexley	410·0	397·6	268·7	628·7	395·6
Brent	2,148·8	831·0	561·5	1,083·1	681·5
Bromley	444·2	928·4	627·3	1,268·5	798·1
Croydon	515·7	698·7	472·1	813·9	512·1
Ealing	556·5	1,248·4	843·5	1,668·1	1,049·6
Enfield	347·4	531·4	359·0	420·6	264·7
Haringey	587·5	105·8	71·5	0·0	0·0
Harrow	346·6	371·7	251·2	138·4	87·1
Havering	399·7	626·7	423·5	662·5	416·9
Hillingdon	437·8	327·8	221·5	386·7	243·3
Hounslow	260·8	349·8	236·3	105·1	66·1
Kingston-upon-Thames	148·3	435·9	294·5	730·4	459·5
Merton	130·5	487·2	329·2	420·7	264·7
Newham	372·3	886·3	598·9	1,021·8	642·9
Redbridge	396·6	907·7	613·3	633·5	398·6
Richmond-upon-Thames	366·6	617·4	417·1	1,058·1	665·8
Sutton	283·1	348·4	235·4	475·5	299·2
Waltham Forest	510·2	909·7	614·7	1,003·3	631·3
Birmingham	975·8	2,708·9	1,830·3	2,925·3	1,840·7
Coventry	591·5	731·3	494·1	728·7	458·5
Dudley	484·6	673·0	454·7	698·2	439·3
Sandwell	322·2	897·8	606·6	1,010·9	636·1
Solihull	147·0	356·1	240·6	424·6	267·1
Walsall	329·4	1,608·5	1,086·8	2,265·5	1,425·5
Wolverhampton	0·0	279·2	188·7	180·2	113·4
Knowsley	921·3	1,179·2	796·8	1,498·4	942·8
Liverpool	1,518·3	6,025·8	4,071·5	5,064·2	3,186·4
St. Helens	508·7	710·1	479·8	834·9	525·3
Sefton	313·9	1,209·8	817·4	1,237·7	778·8
Wirral	1,330·6	1,709·1	1,154·8	2,021·4	1,271·9
Bolton	703·1	1,381·8	933·7	1,048·8	659·9
Bury	585·1	982·4	663·8	1,183·2	744·5
Manchester	1,413·0	2,020·5	1,365·2	2,174·9	1,368·5
Oldham	398·1	808·2	546·1	740·8	466·1
Rochdale	442·3	821·5	555·1	975·0	613·5
Salford	670·5	577·1	389·9	390·4	245·6
Stockport	779·9	856·7	578·8	923·9	581·3
Tameside	380·7	465·0	314·2	532·0	334·8
Trafford	172·6	0·0	0·0	748·9	471·2
Wigan	705·6	680·5	459·8	614·3	386·5
Barnsley	412·8	1,387·1	937·2	945·6	595·0
Doncaster	505·5	869·6	587·5	878·1	552·5
Rotherham	493·8	861·2	581·9	1,264·4	795·6
Sheffield	2,040·8	2,403·3	1,623·8	2,166·7	1,363·3
Bradford	1,582·7	1,942·0	1,312·2	2,115·2	1,330·9
Calderdale	349·7	547·7	370·1	453·8	285·6
Kirklees	1,356·1	2,953·0	1,995·3	2,563·8	1,613·2
Leeds	1,113·5	2,501·4	1,690·1	2,899·3	1,824·3
Wakefield	638·9	1,236·5	835·4	1,319·6	830·3
Gateshead	198·0	710·6	480·1	639·0	402·1
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	736·7	1,011·0	683·1	1,010·4	635·8
North Tyneside	631·1	932·0	629·7	1,213·9	763·8
South Tyneside	245·2	471·7	318·7	531·9	334·7
Sunderland	774·8	n/a	n/a	1,094·6	688·7
Avon	2,456·5	n/a	n/a	5,750·1	3,618·0
Bedfordshire	933·3	1,214·6	820·7	1,252·9	788·3
Berkshire	1,402·9	n/a	n/a	1,962·7	1,234·9
Buckinghamshire	927·4	1,257·0	849·3	997·7	627·7
Cambridgeshire	990·5	1,774·0	1,198·7	1,641·0	1,032·5
Cheshire	2,452·0	5,730·2	3,871·8	7,372·5	4,638·9
Cleveland	1,382·4	2,141·9	1,447·2	2,698·3	1,697·8
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	1,060·3	2,474·9	1,672·2	3,116·7	1,961·0
Cumbria	1,841·5	3,882·2	2,623·1	6,824·2	4,293·9
Derbyshire	2,201·5	4,789·9	3,236·5	5,052·1	3,178·8
Devon	3,008·1	5,148·4	3,478·6	6,664·6	4,193·4
Dorset	1,836·5	3,332·9	2,252·0	4,767·4	2,999·7
Durham	1,016·0	1,879·7	1,270·1	3,274·2	2,060·2
East Sussex	1,918·1	1,282·2	866·4	1,620·7	1,019·8
Essex	4,066·1	6,364·8	4,300·6	7,581·4	4,770·3
Gloucestershire	2,000·4	2,828·5	1,911·2	3,166·0	1,992·1
Hampshire	4,818·4	6,468·5	4,370·6	5,987·4	3,767·3
Hereford and Worcester	1,063·9	1,456·5	984·1	1,770·1	1,113·7
Hertfordshire	2,096·2	3,412·3	2,305·6	3,158·6	1,987·4
Humberside	2,798·0	5,336·0	3,605·4	6,175·8	3,885·9
Isle of Wight	315·0	367·0	248·0	523·5	329·4

	1983-84 Current prices	1990-91 Current prices	1983-84 prices	1991-92 Current prices	1983-84 prices
Kent	5,017·6	5,799·1	3,918·3	6,398·5	4,026·0
Lancashire	4,110·7	9,764·9	6,597·9	14,419·2	9,072·7
Leicestershire	2,494·3	5,791·1	3,912·9	6,906·9	4,345·9
Lincolnshire	1,382·8	1,776·4	1,200·3	2,202·5	1,385·9
Norfolk	1,465·0	2,881·4	1,946·9	3,296·1	2,073·9
North Yorkshire	3,385·0	8,668·8	5,857·3	9,005·5	5,666·4
Northamptonshire	912·3	1,605·0	1,084·5	1,555·7	978·9
Northumberland	864·9	2,256·8	1,524·9	2,446·2	1,539·2
Nottinghamshire	1,672·9	3,012·7	2,035·6	2,532·2	1,593·3
Oxfordshire	629·4	1,255·4	848·3	1,249·5	786·2
Shropshire	1,047·8	1,721·1	1,162·9	2,280·1	1,434·7
Somerset	791·4	1,705·8	1,152·5	1,319·2	830·1
Staffordshire	1,422·4	1,754·0	1,185·2	1,943·0	1,222·6
Suffolk	1,626·2	3,059·8	2,067·4	3,348·7	2,107·0
Surrey	1,621·2	1,963·6	1,326·7	2,492·1	1,563·1
Warwickshire	1,209·8	1,136·9	768·2	625·1	393·3
West Sussex	862·3	1,419·6	959·2	705·5	443·9
Wiltshire	1,150·6	1,764·9	1,192·5	2,042·0	1,284·8
Clywd	973·0	1,948·7	1,316·7	4,348·8	2,736·3
Dyfed	1,227·9	2,445·1	1,652·1	2,159·2	1,358·6
Gwent	1,744·2	827·1	558·9	1,089·7	685·7
Gwynedd	714·8	1,059·8	716·1	1,384·4	871·1
Mid-Glamorgan	402·4	1,480·0	1,000·0	4,462·6	2,808·0
Powys	597·1	947·3	640·1	1,127·2	709·3
South Glamorgan	1,063·0	1,508·0	1,018·9	1,511·3	950·9
West Glamorgan	865·0	1,039·1	702·1	1,318·6	829·7
All English and Welsh LEAs[5]	127,932·4	209,325·9	141,436·4	239,696·3	150,819·7

[1] Not applicable.
[2] n/a LEAs unable to provide appropriate information.
[3] Using March 1993 GDP deflator.
[4] ILBs took over responsibility from ILEA for most awards in 1990-91; some awards were made by the London Residuary Body.
[5] Total expenditure is grossed to compensate both for complete non-returners and partial returners and does not necessarily represent sum of constituent data.

Student Loans

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what is the projected cost of the student loans scheme for each financial year from 1992-93 to 2022-23;

(2) during which financial year he currently expects the student loans scheme to break even.

Mr. Boswell: The student loans scheme produced public expenditure savings, when compared to previous policies, in the first year ot its operation, 1990-91.

Actual United Kingdom expenditure on student loans in 1992-93—net of gross repayments—was £230 million (£183 million in 1990 prices). The table attached gives projections of net United Kingdom expenditure on loans in each financial year from 1993-94 to 2022-23.

Projected net expenditure on student loans scheme
United Kingdom, £ million 1990 prices

Year	Cost
1993-94	222
1994-95	271
1995-96	305
1996-97	338
1997-98	393
1998-99	473
1999-2000	579
2000-2001	685
2001-2002	724
2002-2003	723
2003-2004	716
2004-2005	713
2005-2006	709
2006-2007	709
2007-2008	698
2008-2009	678
2009-2010	628
2010-2011	580
2011-2012	524
2012-2013	494
2013-2014	465
2014-2015	442
2015-2016	422
2016-2017	402
2017-2018	384
2018-2019	369
2019-2020	355
2020-2021	344
2021-2022	329
2022-2023	316

Notes:
1. Figures are for total United Kingdom outlay on student loans, net of repayments of principal and interest.
2. Underlying assumptions are consistent with the projections of net expenditure on loans in England and Wales for 1993-94 to 1995-96 set out in Cm 2210.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to abolish the student loans scheme.

Mr. Boswell: None.

Advertising

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many copies of the booklet entitled "Technology Colleges: Schools for the Future" were printed; what fee was paid for editorial services on the

booklet; what was the fee paid to Graphic Impressions of London for the design; what was the total cost of the printing; and what was the cost of the addition of the spot ultra-violet dried gloss varnish on the cover half-tone and title text.

Mr. Robin Squire: Initially, 15,000 copies of the booklet were printed. In response to demand from schools and others, a further 10,000 copies were printed. No fees were paid for external editorial services. The fee paid to Graphic Impressions of London for the design is commercial in confidence, as is the cost of printing and the spot ultra-violet varnish. The total cost including mailing was less than £1 per copy.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what was the actual expenditure in the financial year 1992-93 by his Department on *(a)* television advertising, *(b)* radio advertising, *(c)* newspaper advertising and *(d)* other promotional material; and what is his latest estimate for for 1993-94.

Mr. Boswell: The actual expenditure figures for advertising and other promotional materials by the Department for the financial year 1992-93 and the latest estimate for 1993-94 are given in the table.

£000s

	1992-93	*1993-94 (estimate)*
Television advertising	0	0
Radio advertising	0	29·2
Newspaper advertising	1,086·4	1,105·8
Other promotional material	5,800·1	7,639·6

Schools Inspection

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what assessment he has made of the standards of probity with which the new tendering arrangements for schools inspection are being conducted.

Mr. Robin Squire: The arrangements for inspecting schools under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 are a matter for Ofsted. I have asked Professor Sutherland to write to the hon. Member.

Local Education Authorities

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what further plans he has to remove responsibilities for education provision from local education authorities in addition to those announced already or which have been the subject of existing legislation.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend has no such plans at present.

Books

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what was the total spent by each local education authority on *(a)* primary school books, *(b)* secondary school books, *(c)* other books, *(d)* the total book expenditure on schools and *(e)* the total expenditure on books for each of the financial years 1987-88 until 1992-93.

Mr. Forth: The information is not available in the form requested. Information on local education authorities' spending on books and equipment in primary (including nursery) schools and secondary schools from 1989-90 to 1991-92, the latest year for which figures are available, is shown in the tables. Figures for 1987-88 and 1988-89 are not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The tables give information on books and equipment both separately and combined. This is because LEAs do not distinguish on a consistent basis between the two headings in their returns of expenditure due to differing local accounting practices. The figures shown for expenditure on books alone therefore do not provide a sound basis for comparisons between LEAs.

(£000's)

Expenditure on books and equipment in 1989-90 to 1991-92 by LEA in secondary schools	*1989-90*		*1989-90*	*1990-91*		*1990-91*	*1991-92*		*1991-92*
	Text and library books	*Education equipment stationery and materials*	*Books and equipment*	*Text and library books*	*Education equipment stationery and materials*	*Books and equipment*	*Text and library books*	*Education equipment stationery and materials*	*Books and equipment*
Corporation of London	5	2	7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Camden	—	—	—	140	456	596	219	715	934
Greenwich	—	—	—	142	794	936	196	305	501
Hackney	—	—	—	3	394	397	153	208	361
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	62	127	189	8	301	309
Islington	—	—	—	102	504	606	137	568	705
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	162	350	512	132	538	670
Lambeth	—	—	—	69	140	209	88	86	174
Lewisham	—	—	—	121	355	476	91	259	350
Southwark	—	—	—	0	399	399	0	726	726
Tower Hamlets	—	—	—	151	839	990	203	917	1,120
Wandsworth	—	—	—	131	1,377	1,508	157	904	1,061
City of Westminster	—	—	—	43	549	592	47	753	800
Barking	206	867	1,073	199	876	1,075	291	736	1,027
Barnet	319	828	1,147	302	874	1,176	394	1,284	1,678
Bexley	228	991	1,219	223	913	1,136	365	1,235	1,600
Brent	0	1,262	1,262	0	668	668	153	971	1,124
Bromley	240	1,225	1,465	318	880	1,198	307	884	1,191

Expenditure on books and equipment in 1989-90 to 1991-92 by LEA in secondary schools	1989-90 Text and library books	1989-90 Education equipment stationery and materials	1989-90 Books and equipment	1990-91 Text and library books	1990-91 Education equipment stationery and materials	1990-91 Books and equipment	1991-92 Text and library books	1991-92 Education equipment stationery and materials	1991-92 Books and equipment
Croydon	336	1,196	1,532	305	993	1,298	313	1,032	1,345
Ealing	77	651	728	269	710	979	201	894	1,095
Enfield	229	635	864	189	1,025	1,214	253	1,058	1,311
Haringey	159	690	849	48	71	119	35	61	96
Harrow	101	601	702	115	1,008	1,123	152	885	1,037
Havering	0	1,712	1,712	0	1,509	1,509	0	1,933	1,933
Hillingdon	223	771	994	26	650	676	205	493	698
Hounslow	230	418	648	165	987	1,152	229	1,165	1,394
Kingston upon Thames	123	805	928	141	463	604	132	685	817
Merton	252	874	1,126	30	744	774	6	514	520
Newham	180	699	879	212	685	897	338	957	1,295
Redbridge	347	1,129	1,476	157	1,569	1,726	436	1,371	1,807
Richmond upon Thames	93	502	595	85	483	568	112	514	626
Sutton	166	565	731	162	520	682	149	430	579
Waltham Forest	155	864	1,019	141	616	757	152	613	765
Birmingham	807	4,342	5,149	927	6,352	7,279	1,025	4,099	5,124
Coventry	60	1,527	1,587	508	1,448	1,956	241	905	1,146
Dudley	59	1,062	1,121	240	759	999	223	677	900
Sandwell	24	1,630	1,654	26	182	208	27	287	314
Solihull	17	1,087	1,104	7	1,231	1,238	0	1,418	1,418
Walsall	15	195	210	39	1,677	1,716	261	1,521	1,782
Wolverhampton	194	607	801	184	224	408	255	1,082	1,337
Knowsley	95	628	723	106	895	1,001	138	932	1,070
Liverpool	86	1,214	1,300	199	1,048	1,247	245	1,386	1,631
St. Helens	123	579	702	98	563	661	47	821	868
Sefton	605	772	1,377	269	165	434	337	1,566	1,903
Wirral	268	2,468	2,736	410	1,583	1,993	345	1,353	1,698
Bolton	198	935	1,133	168	784	952	5	1,657	1,662
Bury	161	563	724	99	477	576	104	529	633
Manchester	109	1,305	1,414	128	1,658	1,786	374	1,741	2,115
Oldham	150	944	1,094	5	1,114	1,119	202	926	1,128
Rochdale	131	1,044	1,175	129	688	817	145	802	947
Salford	3	1,197	1,200	0	1,098	1,098	116	831	947
Stockport	216	1,491	1,707	244	1,670	1,914	257	2,062	2,319
Tameside	253	713	966	254	589	843	312	650	962
Trafford	36	820	856	39	727	766	50	931	981
Wigan	49	1,618	1,667	47	1,684	1,731	44	1,977	2,021
Barnsley	123	731	854	109	517	626	182	882	1,064
Doncaster	274	466	740	81	189	270	0	0	0
Rotherham	169	1,011	1,180	162	444	606	251	666	917
Sheffield	172	790	962	165	1,327	1,492	412	1,574	1,986
Bradford	0	2,534	2,534	0	2,522	2,522	0	2,971	2,971
Calderdale	161	566	727	176	825	1,001	221	659	880
Kirklees	552	1,004	1,556	482	986	1,468	89	169	258
Leeds	236	282	518	454	2,041	2,495	759	2,326	3,085
Wakefield	419	917	1,336	213	955	1,168	327	1,280	1,607
Gateshead	112	517	629	50	834	884	3	1,221	1,224
Newcastle upon Tyne	970	508	1,478	195	1,011	1,206	129	1,250	1,379
North Tyneside	206	504	710	311	663	974	294	839	1.133
South Tyneside	106	759	865	56	638	694	122	482	604
Sunderland	216	1,205	1,421	163	949	1,112	78	2,030	2,108
Isles of Scilly	10	11	21	4	16	20	1	0	1
Avon	753	2,407	3,160	148	4,155	4,303	48	5,365	5,413
Bedfordshire	1,025	2,563	3,588	973	2,604	3,577	1,116	3,484	4,600
Berkshire	1,124	2,000	3,124	1,071	3,295	4,366	534	4,773	5,307
Buckinghamshire	594	2,275	2,869	563	2,102	2,665	674	2,022	2,696
Cambridgeshire	881	2,337	3,218	959	2,571	3,530	718	3,173	3,891
Cheshire	1,396	2,925	4,321	1,247	3,420	4,667	1,266	4,066	5,332
Cleveland	195	2,822	3,017	454	1,207	1,661	716	2,975	3,691
Cornwall	563	1,302	1,865	413	1,793	2,206	490	1,581	2,071
Cumbria	464	1,225	1,689	377	1,443	1,820	490	1,255	1,745
Derbyshire	350	6,203	6,553	514	4,025	4,539	9	5,282	5,291
Devon	1,417	3,856	5,273	1,331	3,514	4,845	1,364	4,004	5,368
Dorset	400	2,627	3,027	629	2,538	3,167	822	3,118	3,940
Durham	486	2,891	3,377	438	2,827	3,265	691	3,165	3,856
East Sussex	620	2,855	3,475	629	2,332	2,961	925	2,726	3,651
Essex	1,289	7,223	8,512	1,647	5,270	6,917	2,195	8,254	10,449
Gloucestershire	643	1,747	2,390	521	2,120	2,641	521	1,911	2,432
Hampshire	431	8,743	9,174	488	5,330	5,818	542	8,328	8,870
Hereford and Worcester	615	2,418	3,033	540	4,381	4,921	1,086	3,851	4,937
Hertfordshire	1,364	4,297	5,661	1,368	5,011	6,379	688	1,158	1,846

Expenditure on books and equipment in 1989-90 to 1991-92 by LEA in secondary schools	1989-90 Text and library books	1989-90 Education equipment stationery and materials	1989-90 Books and equipment	1990-91 Text and library books	1990-91 Education equipment stationery and materials	1990-91 Books and equipment	1991-92 Text and library books	1991-92 Education equipment stationery and materials	1991-92 Books and equipment
Humberside	913	2,372	3,285	3,909	1,376	5,285	4,484	2,275	6,759
Isle of Wight	129	515	644	165	518	683	181	731	912
Kent	843	4,400	5,243	10,074	0	10,074	1,739	6,784	8,523
Lancashire	984	5,715	6,699	929	4,598	5,527	1,260	6,716	7,976
Leicestershire	988	4,655	5,643	1,104	5,787	6,891	1,434	6,666	8,100
Lincolnshire	670	673	1,343	734	1,852	2,586	765	3,256	4,021
Norfolk	585	2,264	2,849	643	1,757	2,400	1,057	2,166	3,223
North Yorkshire	292	3,155	3,447	392	3,886	4,278	453	4,278	4,731
Northamptonshire	853	2,843	3,696	734	3,431	4,165	887	3,931	4,818
Northumberland	426	1,962	2,388	526	1,318	1,844	573	1,306	1,879
Nottinghamshire	1,228	3,359	4,587	1,290	3,414	4,704	1,477	5,291	6,768
Oxfordshire	628	2,800	3,428	946	2,372	3,318	676	2,663	3,339
Shropshire	532	2,130	2,662	528	2,275	2,803	656	2,610	3,266
Somerset	401	2,670	3,071	313	1,070	1,383	381	1,038	1,419
Staffordshire	72	6,726	6,798	1,136	4,656	5,792	1,247	6,221	7,468
Suffolk	655	5,821	6,476	634	3,903	4,537	103	7,617	7,720
Surrey	556	2,750	3,306	553	2,649	3,202	578	3,512	4,090
Warwickshire	377	1,661	2,038	377	1,590	1,967	568	1,400	1,968
West Sussex	718	3,493	4,211	640	2,425	3,065	674	2,509	3,183
Wiltshire	1,385	1,261	2,646	188	2,413	2,601	160	2,858	3,018
TOTAL	40,831	187,053	227,884	51,085	174,289	225,374	47,523	212,816	260,339

(£000's)

Expenditure on books and equipment in 1989-90 to 1991-92 by LEA in nursery/primary schools	1989-90 Text and library books	1989-90 Education equipment stationery and materials	1989-90 Books and equipment	1990-91 Text and library books	1990-91 Education equipment stationery and materials	1990-91 Books and equipment	1991-92 Text and library books	1991-92 Education equipment stationery and materials	1991-92 Books and equipment
ILEA	2,457	7,838	10,295	—	—	—	—	—	—
Corporation of London	41	15	56	2	4	6	6	5	11
Camden	—	—	—	253	285	538	122	515	637
Greenwich	—	—	—	194	741	935	189	229	418
Hackney	—	—	—	0	15	15	270	408	678
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	77	409	486	100	363	463
Islington	—	—	—	179	435	614	231	855	1,086
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	145	397	542	201	519	720
Lambeth	—	—	—	211	185	396	208	106	314
Lewisham	—	—	—	153	413	566	134	161	295
Southwark	—	—	—	0	973	973	0	1,068	1,068
Tower Hamlets	—	—	—	307	1,217	1,524	347	1,396	1,743
Wandsworth	—	—	—	166	1,303	1,469	239	969	1,208
City of Westminster	—	—	—	103	444	547	144	752	896
Barking	184	737	921	150	546	696	237	572	809
Barnet	287	561	848	293	591	884	392	860	1,252
Bexley	88	479	567	78	579	657	92	685	777
Brent	0	1,009	1,009	0	719	719	109	993	1,102
Bromley	212	656	868	205	571	776	246	607	853
Croydon	269	745	1,014	239	1,022	1,261	260	1,010	1,270
Ealing	114	854	968	81	939	1,020	64	1,192	1,256
Enfield	172	540	712	134	965	1,099	179	782	961
Haringey	203	837	1,040	158	81	239	172	81	253
Harrow	152	628	780	189	1,086	1,275	288	1134	1,422
Havering	0	770	770	0	832	832	0	1,097	1,097
Hillingdon	233	464	697	305	515	820	383	402	785
Hounslow	166	523	689	142	694	836	184	1,060	1,244
Kingston upon Thames	101	501	602	109	369	478	94	472	566
Merton	210	403	613	19	681	700	5	619	624
Newham	229	630	859	216	552	768	349	1,109	1,458
Redbridge	246	577	823	251	908	1,159	297	1,009	1,306
Richmond upon Thames	89	352	441	70	376	446	93	575	668
Sutton	165	276	441	188	249	437	209	340	549
Waltham Forest	90	599	689	54	354	408	118	479	597
Birmingham	680	2,609	3,289	1,555	4,812	6,367	1,088	2,242	3,330
Coventry	58	921	979	227	572	799	287	901	1,188
Dudley	0	856	856	247	718	965	294	677	971

Expenditure on books and equipment in 1989-90 to 1991-92 by LEA in nursery/primary schools	1989-90 Text and library books	1989-90 Education equipment stationery and materials	1989-90 Books and equipment	1990-91 Text and library books	1990-91 Education equipment stationery and materials	1990-91 Books and equipment	1991-92 Text and library books	1991-92 Education equipment stationery and materials	1991-92 Books and equipment
Sandwell	73	888	961	78	106	184	84	366	450
Solihull	18	526	544	269	531	800	0	917	917
Walsall	5	542	547	172	1,031	1,203	38	1,143	1,181
Wolverhampton	161	454	615	156	92	248	259	887	1,146
Knowsley	173	400	573	165	451	616	237	788	1,025
Liverpool	125	920	1,045	359	987	1,346	325	1,182	1,507
St. Helens	126	581	707	79	267	346	147	544	691
Sefton	192	605	797	192	44	236	231	823	1,054
Wirral	262	1,306	1,568	239	1,030	1,269	171	665	836
Bolton	263	772	1,035	183	852	1,035	226	1,231	1,457
Bury	144	457	601	149	384	533	142	474	616
Manchester	101	842	943	151	1,197	1,348	596	1,544	2,140
Oldham	137	625	762	5	1,160	1,165	210	964	1,174
Rochdale	172	561	733	187	468	655	204	636	840
Salford	4	762	766	31	680	711	67	828	895
Stockport	259	650	909	290	1,127	1,417	179	1,386	1,565
Tameside	243	609	852	236	528	764	252	576	828
Trafford	143	655	798	156	630	786	211	876	1,087
Wigan	46	877	923	42	914	956	44	1,382	1,426
Barnsley	102	475	577	179	475	654	317	974	1,291
Doncaster	199	388	587	102	202	304	0	0	0
Rotherham	174	612	786	141	438	579	265	601	866
Sheffield	229	874	1,103	197	934	1,131	447	1,366	1,813
Bradford	0	1,367	1,367	0	1,232	1,232	0	1,777	1,777
Calderdale	172	461	633	173	776	949	320	979	1,299
Kirklees	226	676	902	284	684	968	336	910	1,246
Leeds	118	221	339	371	1,121	1,492	480	1,702	2,182
Wakefield	398	644	1,042	227	557	784	353	891	1,244
Gateshead	94	442	536	2	589	591	2	994	996
Newcastle upon Tyne	620	326	946	552	131	683	141	822	963
North Tyneside	137	318	455	212	317	529	168	339	507
South Tyneside	105	322	427	56	401	457	123	486	609
Sunderland	162	592	754	201	1,021	1,222	96	2,248	2,344
Isles of Scilly	1	7	8	2	12	14	2	13	15
Avon	779	1,615	2,394	127	2,930	3,057	15	4,515	4,530
Bedfordshire	365	799	1,164	562	1,155	1,717	642	1,783	2,425
Berkshire	791	925	1,716	895	2,167	3,062	808	3,303	4,111
Buckinghamshire	956	1,688	2,644	1,012	1,905	2,917	1,068	2,135	3,203
Cambridgeshire	669	1,764	2,433	656	1,667	2,323	977	2,134	3,111
Cheshire	767	1,572	2,339	1,199	1,957	3,156	1,409	2,952	4,361
Cleveland	58	1,679	1,737	433	654	1,087	552	1,987	2,539
Cornwall	465	984	1,450	215	948	1,163	313	1,089	1,402
Cumbria	529	855	1,384	250	753	1,003	451	945	1,396
Derbyshire	379	2,833	3,212	109	3,028	3,137	2	3,074	3,076
Devon	1,100	2,006	3,106	1,362	1,827	3,189	1,734	3,897	5,631
Dorset	259	1,586	1,845	547	1,801	2,348	717	1,849	2,566
Durham	457	1,679	2,136	453	1,741	2,194	816	2,247	3,063
East Sussex	453	1,084	1,537	542	1,414	1,956	931	2,337	3,268
Essex	1,237	3,903	5,140	943	2,977	3,920	1,230	5,184	6,414
Gloucestershire	535	1,163	1,698	445	1,419	1,864	369	1,637	2,006
Hampshire	293	3,912	4,205	332	4,059	4,391	368	10,290	10,658
Hereford and Worcester	564	1,178	1,742	446	3,916	4,362	932	2,480	3,412
Hertfordshire	1,304	2,536	3,840	1,461	2,889	4,350	1,139	468	1,607
Humberside	829	1,871	2,700	2,610	753	3,363	4,152	1,842	5,994
Isle of Wight	83	142	225	86	185	271	112	299	411
Kent	559	2,487	3,046	4,501	0	4,501	1,135	5,759	6,894
Lancashire	1,471	3,976	5,447	1,559	4,058	5,617	2,237	5,171	7,408
Leicestershire	1,000	2,823	3,823	1,184	2,981	4,165	1,554	4,671	6,225
Lincolnshire	591	262	853	631	1,431	2,062	954	2,289	3,243
Norfolk	546	1,571	2,117	425	1,831	2,256	825	2,032	2,857
North Yorkshire	331	1,867	2,198	368	1,863	2,231	618	2,713	3,331
Northamptonshire	431	1,765	2,196	494	2,187	2,681	686	2,468	3,154
Northumberland	208	461	669	245	494	739	241	697	938
Nottinghamshire	963	2,127	3,090	1,028	2,027	3,055	1,368	3,266	4,634
Oxfordshire	320	1,333	1,653	351	1,353	1,704	275	2,006	2,281
Shropshire	352	1,080	1,432	386	1,243	1,629	553	1,644	2,197
Somerset	242	1,389	1,631	1,019	1,321	2,340	941	1,059	2,000
Staffordshire	407	2,923	3,330	864	2,920	3,784	940	3,649	4,589
Suffolk	398	1,635	2,033	305	1,608	1,913	106	6,569	6,675
Surrey	418	703	1,121	461	1,069	1,530	592	4,303	4,895
Warwickshire	403	751	1,154	364	913	1,277	240	994	1,234
West Sussex	698	2,394	3,092	557	2,369	2,926	488	2,736	3,224

Expenditure on books and equipment in 1989-90 to 1991-92 by LEA in nursery/primary schools	1989-90 Text and library books	1989-90 Education equipment stationery and materials	1989-90 Books and equipment	1990-91 Text and library books	1990-91 Education equipment stationery and materials	1990-91 Books and equipment	1991-92 Text and library books	1991-92 Education equipment stationery and materials	1991-92 Books and equipment
Wiltshire	1,394	687	2,081	485	2,032	2,517	711	2,289	3,000
Total	35,435	111,145	146,580	42,450	118,766	161,216	47,505	168,320	215,825

Notes:
1. n/a indicates that the LEA has no secondary schools.
2. Doncaster LEA submitted a nil return on books and equipment on their expenditure returns to the DoE for 1991-92.
3. Figures are derived from LEAs' returns of their spending to the Department of the Environment.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the amount spent on books by each local education authority *(a)* per primary school pupil, *(b)* per secondary school pupil and *(c)* per school pupil.

Mr. Forth: Information on local education authorities' spending per pupil on books and equipment in primary (including nursery) schools and secondary schools in 1991-92, the latest year for which figures are available, is shown in the table. The table gives information on books and equipment both separately and combined. This is because LEAs do not distinguish on a consistent basis between the two headings in their returns of expenditure due to differing local accounting practices. The figures shown for expenditure on books alone therefore do not provide a sound basis for comparisons between LEAs.

1991-92 Unit cost per FTE pupil (£)

	Text and library books			Equipment, stationery and materials			Combined books and equipment		
	(a) Nursery and primary schools	(b) Secondary schools	(c) Total	(a) Nursery and primary schools	(b) Secondary schools	(c) Total	(a) Nursery and primary schools	(b) Secondary schools	(c) Total
Corporation of London	28	n/a	28	24	n/a	24	52	n/a	52
Camden	12	22	17	50	71	60	62	92	77
Greenwich	9	14	11	11	22	16	21	36	27
Hackney	17	20	18	26	27	26	43	47	44
Hammersmith and Fulham	11	2	8	41	62	48	52	64	56
Islington	16	18	17	60	75	65	76	93	82
Kensington and Chelsea	32	44	36	83	178	114	115	221	149
Lambeth	11	15	12	6	15	8	17	30	20
Lewisham	7	8	8	8	24	14	15	32	22
Southwark	0	0	0	54	82	63	54	82	63
Tower Hamlets	18	20	18	71	89	77	89	109	96
Wandsworth	15	20	16	60	115	78	74	136	94
City of Westminster	16	7	12	85	105	94	101	112	106
Barking	16	32	23	40	82	56	56	114	78
Barnet	17	24	20	38	79	55	55	103	75
Bexley	5	26	14	39	87	60	44	112	75
Brent	5	15	8	47	93	62	52	107	71
Bromley	13	27	18	31	77	48	43	104	66
Croydon	10	21	14	40	69	51	51	90	65
Ealing	2	18	7	45	81	56	48	99	63
Enfield	8	15	11	36	64	48	44	80	60
Haringey	10	4	8	5	7	5	14	11	13
Harrow	16	19	17	62	110	76	77	129	93
Havering	0	0	0	59	122	88	59	122	88
Hillingdon	21	24	22	22	57	33	43	81	55
Hounslow	10	17	13	59	88	71	69	106	85
Kingston upon Thames	10	18	13	49	94	68	59	113	82
Merton	0	1	1	46	71	55	47	72	56
Newham	15	26	19	49	73	58	64	99	77
Redbridge	17	31	23	57	98	75	74	129	98
Richmond upon Thames	10	16	12	60	72	65	70	88	78
Sutton	18	17	17	29	50	37	46	67	55
Waltham Forest	6	13	9	26	54	37	33	67	46
Birmingham	10	17	13	21	69	38	32	86	51
Coventry	10	13	11	32	50	39	42	63	50
Dudley	11	13	12	25	40	31	36	54	43
Sandwell	3	1	2	12	16	14	15	17	16
Solihull	0	0	0	50	101	72	50	101	72
Walsall	1	14	7	43	82	59	45	96	66
Wolverhampton	11	18	14	39	77	53	50	95	67
Knowsley	14	15	14	46	105	66	60	120	81
Liverpool	7	9	8	25	50	34	32	59	41
St. Helens	9	4	7	32	67	47	41	70	54
Sefton	9	18	13	32	84	54	41	102	66
Wirral	6	16	10	22	64	40	28	81	50
Bolton	9	0	5	47	100	68	56	100	73
Bury	9	10	9	30	51	38	39	61	48
Manchester	13	16	14	34	73	48	48	88	62
Oldham	9	13	11	41	59	49	50	72	59
Rochdale	10	12	10	30	64	43	40	76	53
Salford	3	9	5	36	64	46	39	73	51

	Text and library books			Equipment, stationery and materials			Combined books and equipment		
	(a) Nursery and primary schools	(b) Secondary schools	(c) Total	(a) Nursery and primary schools	(b) Secondary schools	(c) Total	(a) Nursery and primary schools	(b) Secondary schools	(c) Total
Stockport	7	14	10	56	116	81	64	130	92
Tameside	12	24	16	27	49	35	39	73	52
Trafford	11	5	9	47	85	61	58	90	70
Wigan	2	2	2	48	96	68	50	98	70
Barnsley	16	15	16	49	73	58	65	88	74
Doncaster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rotherham	11	14	13	26	37	31	37	52	43
Sheffield	10	17	13	31	66	44	42	83	56
Bradford	0	0	0	48	68	59	48	68	59
Calderdale	17	19	18	53	56	54	70	74	72
Kirklees	10	4	7	27	7	18	37	10	26
Leeds	9	15	12	33	45	39	42	60	51
Wakefield	13	16	14	33	62	46	46	78	60
Gateshead	0	0	0	58	106	77	58	106	77
Newcastle upon Tyne	6	8	7	37	76	54	44	84	61
North Tyneside	11	20	15	22	56	39	33	76	55
South Tyneside	8	14	10	32	54	40	40	67	50
Sunderland	3	4	4	77	110	90	81	114	94
Isles of Scilly	12	9	11	77	0	46	88	9	57
Avon	0	1	0	58	103	76	59	104	77
Bedfordshire	16	26	21	45	80	64	62	106	85
Berkshire	14	13	13	56	116	80	69	129	94
Buckinghamshire	18	21	19	36	64	46	54	86	65
Cambridgeshire	17	18	17	37	78	54	55	96	72
Cheshire	16	20	18	34	64	47	51	84	65
Cleveland	9	18	13	33	76	50	42	94	63
Cornwall	8	17	12	29	55	40	37	72	52
Cumbria	11	16	13	23	42	31	34	59	44
Derbyshire	0	0	0	39	97	63	39	98	63
Devon	23	25	24	51	72	60	74	97	84
Dorset	17	22	20	44	85	63	62	107	83
Durham	15	19	16	41	86	59	56	105	76
East Sussex	20	27	23	50	80	62	69	107	85
Essex	10	23	16	43	87	63	54	110	79
Gloucestershire	9	18	13	39	66	50	48	84	63
Hampshire	3	7	4	82	103	90	85	109	94
Hereford and Worcester	20	23	21	53	81	67	73	104	89
Hertfordshire	15	11	13	6	19	12	21	30	25
Humberside	52	78	63	23	39	30	76	117	93
Isle of Wight	16	18	17	43	72	60	59	90	77
Kent	9	19	14	48	76	60	57	95	74
Lancashire	18	16	17	41	84	58	59	99	75
Leicestershire	20	24	22	61	112	83	81	136	105
Lincolnshire	20	25	22	49	107	72	69	133	94
Norfolk	14	27	19	34	55	42	48	82	61
North Yorkshire	11	10	11	49	99	71	60	109	82
Northamptonshire	14	21	18	51	95	71	65	116	89
Northumberland	12	20	17	35	46	42	48	66	58
Nottinghamshire	16	24	19	39	85	59	56	108	78
Oxfordshire	7	20	13	51	81	65	58	101	78
Shropshire	16	25	20	49	100	71	65	126	91
Somerset	28	14	21	31	38	34	59	52	56
Staffordshire	10	18	14	40	92	62	51	110	76
Suffolk	3	2	2	160	163	162	162	165	164
Surrey	8	15	10	58	88	69	66	103	79
Warwickshire	5	24	12	22	59	35	28	83	47
West Sussex	10	17	13	54	63	58	64	80	71
Wiltshire	16	5	11	52	88	67	68	93	78

Notes:
1. n/a indicates that the LEA has no secondary schools.
2. Doncaster LEA submitted a nil return on books and equipment on their expenditure returns to the DoE.
3. Figures are derived from LEAs' returns of their spending to the Department of the Environment and of their pupil numbers to the Department for Education.

Middle School (Lowestoft)

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education when he expects to announce a decision on Suffolk county council's application to build a fourth middle school for north Lowestoft.

Mr. Robin Squire: Suffolk's proposals are currently under consideration. My right hon. Friend will announce a decision on them as soon as possible.

School Libraries

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether he will list the local education authorities *(a)* who fund school library service, *(b)* who subcontract school libraries services to an outside organisation and *(c)* who have no school library service.

Mr. Forth: The Department does not keep this information centrally.

Opting Out (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what complaints he has received from parents in Nottinghamshire about the conduct of the county council during the opting out process of schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend has not received any complaints from parents about the conduct of Nottinghamshire county council in relation to ballots for grant-maintained status since the Department's exchange of correspondence with the Director of Education about information circulated in connection with the ballots at Eastwood comprehensive school and George Spencer school at the end of last year.

Child Protection

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps he intends to take to ensure that schools are able to send teachers for training in child protection matters.

Mr. Robin Squire: Schools are already able to send teachers for training in child protection matters.

Repairs and Maintenance

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he makes, and from what source, of the cost of the backlog of the repairs and maintenance of schools in England.

Mr. Forth: An estimate based on the 1986 survey of school buildings suggested that some £2 billion at 1990 prices was required to remedy deficiencies in school buildings. Over £4·5 billion will have been spent on schools since, including the current financial year, much of it in meeting the deficiencies identified.

Capital Allocations

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what was the regional total of capital allocations for education to the local authorities in England for *(a)* 1979-80, *(b)* 1982-83, *(c)* 1985-86 and *(d)* each year since 1988-89 for each standard English region.

Mr. Forth *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* Figures for 1979-80 are not available. The table gives figures for the other years as requested.

Capital allocations by standard English region (£000s)

Region	*1982-83*	*1985-86*	*1988-89*	*1989-90*
South East	114,968	124,079	159,364	136,804
South West	38,364	31,745	38,347	45,205
East Anglia	15,438	11,756	16,193	16,545
West Midlands	43,661	36,038	39,150	35,253
East Midlands	33,186	28,481	32,967	29,859
Northwest	56,202	59,129	76,676	69,516
Yorkshire and Humberside	40,988	34,546	49,032	41,330
Northern	23,480	24,447	30,269	30,172

Region	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*	*1993-94*
South East	191,185	225,893	244,759	185,615
South West	60,886	48,854	60,990	47,695
East Anglia	24,528	21,794	30,990	20,328
West Midlands	50,707	61,351	62,733	41,391
East Midlands	45,933	54,921	52,953	42,183
Northwest	102,502	112,214	115,492	72,187
Yorkshire and Humberside	51,383	66,368	88,896	59,511
Northern	31,674	39,809	46,912	38,032

Notes:

1. Tables are in £000s and in cash terms.
2. Tables represent combined totals of:
   (a) voluntary aided and special agreement schools—approved levels of governors' expenditure eligible for 85 per cent. grant (there are no VA schools in the Scilly Isles);
   (b) LEA capital allocations and, from 1990-91, Annual Capital Guidelines, together with Supplementary Credit Approvals (SCAs).
3. Allocations for self-governing (GM) schools are not included.
4. Figures for 1979-80 are not available.
5. Figures for 1993-94 include SCAs issued up to 3 November 1993.
6. Figures prior to 1993-94 include allocations for FE/sixth form colleges.
7. The following groups of LEAs have been used to define regions:
   South East: City of London, Inner London Boroughs, Outer London Boroughs, Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, West Sussex;
   South West: Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Isles of Scilly;
   East Anglia: Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk;
   West Midlands: Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton;
   East Midlands: Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire;
   North West: Cheshire, Lancashire, Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan, Knowsley, Liverpool, St. Helens, Sefton, Wirral;
   Yorkshire and Humberside: Humberside, North Yorkshire, Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield;
   Northern: Cleveland, Cumbria, Durham, Northumberland, Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what was the national total of capital allocations for education to local authorities in England for *(a)* 1979-80, *(b)* 1982-83, *(c)* 1985-86 and *(d)* each year since 1988-89; and if he will give the breakdown of the total between (i) non-metropolitan district councils, (ii) county councils, (iii) metropolitan district councils, (iv) London boroughs and (v) the City of London.

Mr. Forth *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* Figures for 1979-80 are not available. The table gives figures for the other years as requested.

Capital allocations by type of authority

(£ thousands)

		1982-83	*1985-86*	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*	*1993-94*
(i)	Non-metropolitan district councils[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(ii)	County councils	212,200	208,070	253,953	242,373	321,970	361,380	406,358	301,306
(iii)	Metropolitan district councils	103,967	88,896	128,710	110,262	146,430	178,176	196,631	122,987
(iv)	London boroughs	50,120	53,255	59,335	52,049	90,396	91,647	100,736	82,649
(v)	City of London	—	—	—	—	0	2	0	0
National Total		366,287	350,221	441,998	404,684	558,797	631,205	703,725	506,941

[1] Allocations are not made to non-metropolitan district councils.

Notes:

1. Tables are in £ thousands and in cash terms.
2. Tables represent combined totals of:
   (a) Voluntary aided and special agreement schools—approved levels of governors' expenditure eligible for 85 per cent. grant (there are no VA schools in the Scilly Isles);
   (b) LEA capital allocations and, from 1990-91, Annual Capital Guidelines, together with Supplementary Credit Approvals (SCAs).
3. Allocations for self-governing (GM) schools are not included.
4. Figures for 1979-80 are not available.
5. Figures for 1993-94 include SCAs issued up to 3 November 1993.
6. Figures prior to 1993-94 include allocations for FE/sixth form colleges.
7. Figures for the City of London (v) prior to 1990-91 are included in the total for London boroughs (iv).

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what was the capital allocation for education for each local authority in England for *(a)* 1979-80, *(b)* 1982-83, *(c)* 1985-86 and *(d)* each year since 1988-89.

Mr. Forth *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* Figures for 1979-80 are not available. The table gives figures for the other years as requested.

Capital allocations by LEA (£000s)

LEA Name	*1982-83*	*1985-86*	*1988-89*	*1989-90*
City of London	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Camden	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Greenwich	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Hackney	—	—	—	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Islington	—	—	—	—
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Lambeth	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Lewisham	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Southwark	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Tower Hamlets	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Wandsworth	—	—	—	—
London Borough of Westminster	—	—	—	—
ILEA	18,926	18,557	20,106	14,324
London Borough of Barking	3,126	967	1,654	245
London Borough of Barnet	3,864	4,974	3,109	2,388
London Borough of Bexley	761	546	1,851	1,087
London Borough of Brent	2,124	1,937	2,999	982
London Borough of Bromley	1,065	839	433	668
London Borough of Croydon	382	2,215	1,635	1,008
London Borough of Ealing	2,002	2,792	2,145	552
London Borough of Enfield	538	1,586	1,701	1,978
London Borough of Haringey	3,253	2,070	2,580	2,606
London Borough of Harrow	598	844	1,668	700
London Borough of Havering	414	347	762	2,199
London Borough of Hillingdon	1,779	588	1,268	950
London Borough of Hounslow	2,287	2,390	1,268	529
London Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames	1,990	2,202	1,695	337
London Borough of Merton	733	2,395	1,023	5,543
London Borough of Newham	2,501	2,583	3,246	3,605
London Borough of Redbridge	1,124	2,025	3,779	2,603
London Borough Richmond-upon-Thames	659	379	277	898

LEA Name	1982-83	1985-86	1988-89	1989-90
London Borough of Sutton	233	659	627	817
London Borough of Waltham Forest	1,761	2,360	5,509	8,030
Birmingham	10,603	4,765	6,392	7,210
Coventry	4,116	3,164	6,308	3,242
Dudley	2,803	3,337	2,230	3,707
Sandwell	1,682	1,939	1,148	2,138
Solihull	750	717	1,338	1,169
Walsall	3,306	1,354	998	983
Wovlerhampton	3,224	2,377	2,090	528
Knowsley	809	1,413	2,351	2,268
Liverpool	6,490	6,950	3,528	2,667
St. Helens	3,794	1,890	4,094	5,415
Sefton	1,713	1,723	2,018	2,400
Wirral	3,197	1,631	2,640	4,642
Bolton	3,369	1,148	4,844	1,536
Bury	856	843	1,519	1,826
Manchester	4,228	9,552	12,199	6,610
Oldham	1,186	1,087	5,185	4,088
Rochdale	2,475	1,927	3,452	3,364
Salford	1,491	1,680	4,445	4,096
Stockport	1,540	1,680	2,928	1,564
Wigan	4,885	2,094	3,893	1,879
Tameside	1,879	605	806	776
Trafford	676	1,634	476	2,911
Barnsley	703	1,090	487	270
Doncaster	1,664	519	506	692
Rotherham	2,051	527	1,127	840
Sheffield	4,990	3,912	8,187	5,364
Bradford	5,226	8,619	11,158	8,807
Calderdale	1,028	981	3,619	2,882
Kirklees	4,492	4,134	1,726	813
Leeds	7,327	3,355	5,036	8,339
Wakefield	2,762	1,563	3,643	3,365
Gateshead	567	1,440	2,977	1,841
Newcastle-U-Tyne	2,200	1,934	4,619	2,149
North Tyneside	1,127	2,664	2,758	2,351
South Tyneside	1,931	1,524	2,793	3,572
Sunderland	2,827	3,124	5,192	3,958
Isles of Scilly	—	—	139	149
Avon	6,886	4,342	4,713	4,587
Bedfordshire	4,314	1,665	1,630	2,022
Berkshire	6,522	8,002	6,059	7,000
Buckinghamshire	7,372	5,989	8,469	7,797
Cambridgeshire	5,656	4,474	4,659	6,050
Cheshire	7,220	5,872	5,406	5,076
Cleveland	7,987	4,693	3,945	5,527
Cornwall	5,353	3,495	6,558	7,216
Cumbria	1,919	4,331	5,287	7,312
Derbyshire	9,066	7,614	12,232	12,070
Devon	9,028	7,877	9,053	14,403
Dorset	6,136	5,600	5,473	4,167
Durham	2,456	3,443	1,565	2,179
East Sussex	5,191	5,785	11,906	10,088
Essex	7,750	12,146	21,748	17,231
Gloucestershire	3,205	5,618	5,838	7,152
Hampshire	10,005	12,404	16,838	8,867
Hereford and Worcester	2,631	2,273	3,258	3,104
Hertfordshire	3,728	6,169	6,332	5,505
Humberside	8,127	4,158	9,506	7,640
Isle of Wight	493	1,253	2,502	1,928
Kent	7,816	5,516	7,974	9,544
Lancashire	10,394	17,400	16,892	18,398
Leicestershire	8,979	8,546	9,223	7,245
Lincolnshire	4,477	4,342	4,519	3,026
Norfolk	6,039	3,247	4,274	4,177
North Yorkshire	2,618	5,688	4,037	2,318
Northamptonshire	5,126	4,536	3,322	4,066
Northumberland	2,466	1,294	1,133	1,283
Nottinghamshire	5,538	3,443	3,671	3,452
Oxfordshire	4,320	3,763	5,355	3,822
Shropshire	3,557	4,208	4,874	5,063
Somerset	3,090	1,273	3,323	4,594
Staffordshire	9,266	9,956	8,424	5,749
Suffolk	3,743	4,035	7,260	6,318
Surrey	4,902	4,433	6,519	8,146
Warwickshire	1,723	1,948	2,090	2,360
West Sussex	2,435	3,699	4,697	2,805

LEA Name	1982-83	1985-86	1988-89	1989-90
Wiltshire	4,666	3,540	3,250	2,937
City of London	0	2	0	0
London Borough of Camden	2,518	1,111	2,653	507
London Borough of Greenwich	1,649	712	1,198	1,647
London Borough of Hackney	1,161	2,187	2,669	3,164
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,499	3,261	4,756	1,889
London Borough of Islington	417	1,183	1,345	665
Kensington and Chelsea	6,920	4,486	4,507	3,625
London Borough Lambeth	991	1,222	2,127	1,823
London Borough of Lewisham	1,434	2,577	3,052	1,685
London Borough of Southwark	2,615	2,119	3,435	3,684
London Borough of Tower Hamlets	18,261	19,637	13,685	12,440
London Borough of Wandsworth	1,303	1,423	2,857	2,310
London Borough of Westminster	575	948	1,007	1,164
ILEA				
London Borough of Barking	2,425	2,528	1,326	949
London Borough of Barnet	1,800	1,852	2,395	3,914
London Borough of Bexley	1,679	2,196	3,492	2,443
London Borough of Brent	1,081	1,268	1,941	1,681
London Borough of Bromley	1,764	3,854	2,671	2,353
London Borough of Croydon	2,127	3,865	4,205	1,413
London Borough of Ealing	982	1,548	4,038	6,387
London Borough of Enfield	1,659	2,273	4,117	3,139
London Borough of Haringey	3,468	2,246	1,872	2,944
London Borough of Harrow	1,073	1,057	3,795	4,078
London Borough of Havering	6,238	2,092	2,196	1,060
London Borough of Hillingdon	1,372	1,025	1,819	1,652
London Borough of Houslow	539	1,569	4,135	4,918
London Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames	294	1,303	686	838
London Borough of Merton	4,057	1,727	1,806	990
London Borough of Newham	6,461	8,721	6,420	1,509
London Borough of Redbridge	1,891	868	1,720	2,790
London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames	1,895	1,149	613	491
London Borough of Sutton	3,586	5,718	3,945	1,396
London Borough of Waltham Forest	6,661	3,924	4,253	3,099
Birmingham	11,666	12,196	13,325	8,852
Coventry	2,882	3,549	6,122	1,740
Dudley	5,415	11,514	10,627	2,098
Sandwell	1,823	1,460	2,054	2,720
Solihull	2,752	1,938	1,542	2,729
Walsall	1,419	1,410	1,285	1,115
Wolverhampton	936	2,128	3,119	3,418
Knowsley	2,249	1,744	2,769	1,397
Liverpool	14,229	10,256	11,439	8,639
St. Helens	5,194	5,002	2,630	1,035
Sefton	5,703	5,958	5,374	2,940
Wirral	3,658	4,010	2,866	2,139
Bolton	939	1,335	2,993	664
Bury	1,456	1,828	1,485	1,223
Manchester	4,391	6,314	10,985	9,165
Oldham	6,126	8,696	4,115	2,972
Rochdale	4,947	8,567	9,076	1,254
Salford	4,288	7,126	2,988	2,700
Stockport	1,972	2,210	2,001	1,085
Wigan	5,077	8,570	5,966	2,507
Tameside	1,490	2,029	3,506	1,987
Trafford	9,740	4,398	3,195	1,703
Barnsley	1,933	1,053	2,970	2,883
Doncaster	1,075	556	910	974
Rotherham	1,589	1,284	3,040	1,730
Sheffield	2,948	1,798	6,951	2,346
Bradford	10,881	10,485	11,405	7,246
Calderdale	1,718	2,105	2,328	1,379
Kirklees	1,360	4,015	6,525	6,783
Leeds	10,653	28,660	29,775	10,160
Wakefield	5,539	2,645	6,691	11,780
Gateshead	1,139	2,904	2,074	1,385
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	2,161	4,130	3,326	2,075
North Tyneside	2,730	1,105	2,778	4,473
South Tyneside	1,945	2,009	2,286	958
Sunderland	2,409	3,188	6,111	4,733
Isles of Scilly	221	66	116	40
Avon	7,964	5,564	5,368	5,954
Bedfordshire	2,424	2,666	5,040	3,408

LEA Name	1982-83	1985-86	1988-89	1989-90
Berkshire	4,938	4,025	6,110	4,631
Buckinghamshire	7,207	9,914	9,564	7,964
Cambridgeshire	13,287	8,615	15,151	8,072
Cheshire	7,550	7,254	12,229	13,348
Cleveland	4,929	3,377	5,430	5,192
Cornwall	7,723	7,215	9,534	3,069
Cumbria	8,584	10,788	13,015	10,097
Derbyshire	15,875	22,219	18,187	14,374
Devon	13,449	8,659	13,679	11,527
Dorset	8,700	6,590	8,043	8,739
Durham	5,201	7,629	8,661	6,618
East Sussex	10,338	17,826	19,277	11,942
Essex	14,424	23,220	22,304	12,466
Gloucestershire	8,840	7,671	9,367	9,979
Hampshire	16,989	18,443	16,009	11,538
Hereford and Worcester	7,329	8,130	5,756	3,307
Hertfordshire	6,728	8,180	8,546	4,986
Humberside	9,512	8,417	10,406	7,326
Isle of Wight	1,999	2,473	2,100	1,983
Kent	18,966	26,610	28,409	18,144
Lancashire	23,494	26,916	31,875	17,428
Leicestershire	11,613	8,440	10,040	7,046
Lincolnshire	7,512	10,292	13,366	11,616
Norfolk	3,064	2,845	3,667	4,531
North Yorkshire	4,174	5,350	7,894	6,905
Northamptonshire	6,182	8,668	5,142	5,878
Northumberland	2,576	4,681	3,231	2,501
Nottinghamshire	4,752	5,302	6,217	3,269
Oxfordshire	5,671	9,127	8,784	4,309
Shropshire	6,439	6,820	4,655	4,554
Somerset	6,966	7,048	8,485	5,636
Staffordshire	7,443	9,623	11,220	8,095
Suffolk	8,177	10,334	12,172	7,725
Surrey	4,947	6,377	13,376	16,869
Warwickshire	2,604	2,583	3,028	2,765
West Sussex	6,160	5,383	4,504	4,725
Wiltshire	7,023	6,041	6,398	2,752

Notes:

1. Tables are in £000s and in cash terms.
2. Tables represent combined totals of:
   a. voluntary aided and special agreement schools—approved levels of governors' expenditure eligible for 85 per cent. grant (there are no VA schools in the Scilly Isles);
   b. LEA capital allocations and, from 1990-91, Annual Capital Guidelines, together with Supplementary Credit Approvals (SCAs).
3. Allocations for self-governing (GM) schools are not included.
4. Figures for 1979-80 are not available.
5. Figures for 1993-94 include SCAs issued up to 3 November 1993.
6. Figures prior to 1993-94 include allocations for FE/sixth form colleges.

PRIME MINISTER

Nuclear Testing

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Prime Minister what plans the Government have to declare a moratorium on British nuclear testing.

The Prime Minister: We have no such plans, but we have made it clear that we will carry out no nuclear tests while the United States moratorium continues.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Prime Minister what discussion he has had with the Government of the United States of America on making representations to the Government of China with a view to dissuading them from conducting an underground nuclear test; and what action he took as a result.

The Prime Minister: The United States Government informed us in September of their intention to seek to dissuade China from conducting a nuclear test. In the event, the Chinese conducted a test on 5 October. We have expressed our regret at this, given the background of restraint on testing by the other nuclear powers.

Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the United States Government on the prospects for concluding a comprehensive test ban treaty by 1996; and what plans the Government have to announce a date by which they hope such a treaty may be concluded.

The Prime Minister: In our exchanges with the United States Government on approaches to a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT), the time scale for concluding such a treaty is one of a number of issues we have discussed. We do not believe that setting a deadline for the treaty's conclusion will necessarily help the conduct of negotiations.

Cyprus

Dr. Spink: To ask the Prime Minister if he will raise at the United Nations Security Council the continued Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus; and if he will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: We hope that direct talks between the parties, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, will resume after next month's elections in northern Cyprus. We stand ready, together with other Security Council members, to consider alternative ways to promote the effective implementation of United Nations resolutions on Cyprus should there be no further progress by the time of Mr. Boutros Ghali's next report.

Engagements

Sir Peter Tapsell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 4 November.

The Prime Minister: This morning I presided at a meeting of the Cabinet and had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in this House, I shall be having further meetings later today.

Agency for Health and Safety

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Prime Minister what are the costs and benefits to the United Kingdom in financial and administrative terms of the establishment of the Agency for Health and Safety.

The Prime Minister: It is too early to say, but we believe that the agency should be beneficial if it can facilitate the use of risk assessment as a basis for prioritising commission proposals; if it can avoid duplication of research; and if it can contribute to more consistent standards of enforcement.

Northern Ireland

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Prime Minister in what circumstances the Government would recommend a referendum in the United Kingdom over constitutional proposals for Northern Ireland based on an agreement reached with the Government of the Irish Republic.

The Prime Minister: The Government are fully committed to seeking a comprehensive political settlement with the four main Northern Ireland constitutional parties and the Irish Government, which addresses all three main relationships: those within Northern Ireland; those within the island of Ireland; and those between the British and Irish Governments. The Government believe that the best way forward lies with the talks process and the question of how any such agreement is subsequently endorsed is a matter for discussion between all the participants in this process.

European Monetary Union

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Prime Minister what is meant by the full use of EMU as set out in the presidency conclusions.

The Prime Minister: The presidency conclusions of the European Council on 29 October recorded all member states' commitment to the full implementation of the second stage of economic and monetary union. In addition to the establishment of the European Monetary Institute, this will mean strengthened co-operation between member states on their economic and monetary policies to facilitate economic convergence.

Maastricht

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Prime Minister how the mechanisms for co-ordinating economic policies laid down in the Maastricht treaty will strengthen the process of convergence with the aim of returning to growth and reducing unemployment.

The Prime Minister: The provisions in the Maastricht treaty relating to multilateral surveillance of member states' economic policies and the excessive deficits procedure will enable the Council to monitor progress with economic convergence. The Council's discussions on these issues will inform national Governments as they frame their economic policies.

Policy Unit

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister how many Central Policy Review Staff staff were absorbed into the No. 10 policy unit in 1983-84; at what cost; and what was the cost of the policy unit in that year and at the latest available date.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Two staff were absorbed into the No. 10 policy unit from the Central Policy Review Staff; the cost involved was negligible.

The cost of the policy unit in 1983-84 was £154,923 and the estimated cost for 1993-94 is £615,000. Both figures include the costs of unit members and secretarial support staff.

National Portrait Gallery

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Prime Minister how many nominations he received in appointing the new director of the national portrait gallery; and to what extent the views of trustees were presented to him.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* As is required by law, the board of trustees of the national portrait gallery submitted to me for my approval their proposal for the new director of the gallery. In the knowledge that the trustees had conducted an open competition for the post, I was content to approve their choice of appointee on the basis of their recommendation.

EMPLOYMENT

Restart Programmes

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list contractors approved for the running of restart programmes and the number of places they are contracted for in the current financial year; and what is the standard length of contract periods for such courses.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service Agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. M. Fogden to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 4 November 1993

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about Restart Courses. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

Restart Courses aim to help those people who have been unemployed for a long time and are having the most difficulty in getting back to work. Attending a course complements regular job search by providing people with the opportunity to explore all the options open to them and give them confidence to take the next step back to work. They normally last a week.

We currently have around 180 Restart course contracts with organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. These contracts are normally awarded as a result of a full competitive tendering exercise. Full details about each contract are held locally by the Area Manager who awarded the contract. I attach a list of contractors which was last compiled in April 1993.

Contracts normally run for 2 years. In some cases contracts may be either extended or shortened where changes to the programme are anticipated. In the current financial year we aim to provide up to 140,000 Restart Course places.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the *Official Report*. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Accents
Park House
63 Park Street
Bridgend
CF31 4AX
Advantage Enterprises
290 Stanton Road
Stanton
Burton on Trent
DE15 9SQ
Aintree training Services
Merseyside Centre for the Deaf
Queens Drive
West Derby
Liverpool
L13 OAR
London Connection
12 Adelaide Street
London WC2
Aintree Training Services
44 Eastgate
Leeds
LS2 1AA
Al-Falah
Richmond Road
Bradford
BD7 1DR
Alan Honnor Associates Ltd.
2 The Square
Wimbourne Dorset
BH21 1JA
Apex Trust
Northfield School
Tinkes Farm Road
Birmingham
B31 1RR
Arrow training
School Hill Trading Estate
Chepstow
Arun District council
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
Sussex
BN17 5LF
Astra Training
Leeholme Road
Billingham
Cleveland
Bath City Council
Saw Close
Bath
Bexley Training Group
17 Upland Road
Bexley Heath
Kent
DA7 4NR
Birmingham Rathbone Society
19-20 Tenby Street North
Hockley
Birmingham
B1 3EN
Boston College
Rowley Road
Boston
Lincs
PE21 6JF
Bournville CFE
Bridge Centre
Bristol Road South
Birmingham
B31 2AJ
Bromley Adult Education
Princes Plain
Church Lane
Bromley
Kent
BTG Training and Consultancy
27 Stafford Street
Hanley
Stoke on Trent
ST1 1JU
Business 2 Business
14 Melton Road
Leicester
LE4 5EA
Cambridge Jobsearch Ltd.
25 Gwydir Street
Cambridge
CB1 2LG
Capital Trading
343A Kilburn High Road
London
NW6 7QB
Cathedral Training
42 Hartlepool Road
Vauxhall
London
SE11 5AY
Chamber of Commerce
Industry House
Summer Lane
Barnsley
CHET
Oaklands College

Hatfield Campus
Woods Avenue
Hatfield

CICT
Hamilton House
Cargo Fleet Lane
Middlesbrough
Cleveland

City Trading
39–41 Chapel Street
Bradford
BD1 5BY

Combined Training Services
8 Rolle Street
Exmouth
EX8 1HE

Community Education Project
1st Floor, YMCA
North View
Ashington
NE63 9EQ

Computer Insight
159 High Street
Penge
London
SE20 7DS

Convergence Systems
5th Floor West
Niel House
3-15 Whitechapel Road
London E11

CTC
139 Southchurch Road
Southend
SS1 2NW

DCC
Community Education Service
Area Education Office
St. Thomas Green
Haverfordwest

Antur Teifi
Midland Bank Chambers
Newcastle Emlyn
Dyfed

Di-Bacc
Old Bank Buildings
Porth
Mid-Glamorgan

Dial Training
51 Cardiff Road
Caerphilly

Direct Training Services
2nd Floor
Grosvenor House
Anlaby Road
Hull

Dunstable College
Finbar House
Dunstable College
21-24 Vernon Place
Dunstable

East Birmingham College
Garretts Green Lane
Birmingham 33

East Yorkshire College
St. Mary's Walk
Bridlington
YO16 5JW

East Lindsey Training Services
Meripian House
Eastgate
Louth
Lincs

EKTA
Victoria Road
Margate Kent

Emp-Tech
18 Devon Square
Newton Abbot
TQ12 2HR

EMRMC
Management House
Daleside Road
Nottingham

Families Housing and Welfare Services
4801 Horne Road
Catterick Garrison
North Yorks
DL9 4JJ

Fernly Business Services
The Derwent Business Centre
Clarke Street
Derby
DE1 2BU

Filton College
Filton Avenue
Bristol

GMCS
91 Brick Lane
London
E1 6QN

Gordon Franks
7 Freedom Street
Birmingham 5

Grand Met Trust
Suite 4, Thrift House
12/15 Wellington Place
Hastings
TN34 1NY

Grand Met Trust
Two Rivers Industrial Estate
Braunton Road
Barnstaple
EX31 1JY

Grand Met Trust
Parkside Chambers
Parkside Road
Paignton
TQ4 6AE

Grand Met Trust
681 Holloway Road
London N19

Grand Met Trust
64–65 North Road
Brighton
BN1 1YD

Grand Met Trust
1st Floor

The Pithay
Bristol
BS1 2NQ
Grand Met Trust
38 Rumbridge street
Totton
Hants
SO4 4DS
Greenwich Training Co
Ferranti Close
Westminster Industrial estate
Woolwich
London SE18
Gwynedd Local Education Authority
County Offices
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
Harrogate Training Services
1 Prospect Crescent
Harrogate
HG1 1RH
Headwey (UK) Ltd
14-16 Carlton Road
South 1
Weymouth
DT4 7PJ
Hotel and Catering
International House
High Street
Ealing
London
Humberside County Council
Boothferry Adult Education
Parkside
Weston Road
Goole
Humberside Business Training
Globe House
Modder Street
Ashby
Scunthorpe
DA16 2SH
Incomm Business Services
7th Floor, Albany House
Hurst Street
Birmingham
Instant Muscle Ltd
13 Market Street
Pontypridd
CF37 2ST
Instant Muscle Ltd
Carmelite House
Posterngate
Hull
Intec Business Colleges
Garmston Court
18 St. Martin's Lane
Lincoln
Invicta Training
17 Garden Road
Tunbridge Wells
Jasmire Ltd
6 Trafalgar Road
Kettering
NN16 8DA

Jay Training Services
Masters House
1 Marlborough Hill
Harrow
Middlesex
HA1 1TJ
JDA
194 Kingrosia Park
Clydach
Swansea
SA6 5PF
JEG Group Ltd
Dennis House
Hawley Road
Hinckley
Leics
JHP Training Ltd
Sutherland House
Matlock Road
Foleshill
Coventry
CV1 4JQ
JHP
2nd Floor, Sutherland House
Matlock Road
Foleshill
Coventry
CV1 4JQ
JHP Training
Sutherland House
Matlock Road
Foleshill
Coventry
CV1 4JQ
JHP Training
Estdale Centre
Mill Street
Slough
SL2 5DP
JIL Training
The Effective Learning
15 The Butts
Rochdale
OL16 1FS
Joblink Trust
1st Floor, Victoria Station House
191 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 5NE
Jobworld
Suite 6
Walker Building
49 Whitechapel
Liverpool
L1 6DT
John Christopher associates
3 Gwynfaes
Tanrallt
Llanllyfni
Gwynedd
Johnstoane Wintrip Associates
Glendale House
Washington
KADTAL
New Devonshire House

Devonshire Street
Keighley
BD21 2AU

Kennedy Scott
1 Penn Place
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3

Kennedy Scott Ltd.
Oakwood
Marriotts Gate
Lutton
Spalding
Lincolnshire

Key Training
Granville Chambers
Midland Road
Wellingborough
NN8 1HA

Y Training Services
19 Sturton Street
Cambridge
CB1 2QB

LBC
Llanelli

Borough Training Centre
North Dock
Llanelli

LCHE
Park Square
Luton
LU1 3JU

Leeds Chamber Training Services
2nd Floor
7 Eastgate
Leeds
LS2 7LY

Lewisham African Organisation
53 Deptford Broadway
Deptford
London SE8

Lynne Bier
60 Lyndhurst Road
London N22

Mantech Training Ltd
4th Floor
The Arbour
87 Lord Street
Liverpool
L2 6PG

Mantech Training
The Arbour
87 Lord Street
Liverpool
L2 6PG

Merthyr College
Ynysfach
Merthyr Tydfil

Michael Carter Associates
Malt House Studio
30 New Road
Crickhowell
Powys

Microcom
Inverclyde House
6 Orchard Avenue
Bothwell
G71 8NF

Mid Kent AEC
9 Sittingbourne Road
Maidstone
Kent

Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce
Commerce House
Wakefield Road
Aspley
Huddersfield
HD5 9AA

Mr. S. Goldman
St. James House
108 Hampstead Road
London
NW1 2LS

MSS
The Cottage
Linden Road
The Pludds
Ruarden
Gloucestershire

MYCC
New Commerce House
168 Westgate
Wakefield
WF2 9FR

NACRO
Maesgwyn Road
Wrexham
Clwyd

NACRO
Bowden House
210-216 Newhall Road
Sheffield
S9 2QL

NACRO NCT
Colton House
2-4 Colton Street
Leicester
LE1 1QB

Nechells Employment Resource Agency
42 Revesby Walk
Nechells
Birmingham
B7 4LG

NNCFE
Carlton Road
Worksop
Notts

Norfolk Training Services
Harford Centre
Hall Road
Norwich

Norfolk and Waveney Chamber of Commerce and Industry
10 Castle Meadow
Norfolk

NORTEC
8 White Lion Walk
Banbury
OX16 8UD

North Kent AEC
College Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
North West Kent College
Miskin Road
Dartford
Kent
North West Kent AES
Victoria Centre
Darnley Road
Gravesend
North Devon College
Old Sticklepath Hill
Barnstable
Devon EX31 2BQ
North Avon Training
Canningford House
38 Victoria Street
Bristol
North Hertfordshire College
Broadway
Letchworth
Herts
NYCC
Fresh Options
6 Zetnad Street
Northallerton
OTR
22 Queen Street
Mansfield
Partnership Services Ltd
North Oxon College of Further Education
Broughton Road
Banbury
OX16 9QA
PCS Ltd
2 Christina Street
Swansea
SA1 4EW
PDC
24–26 Barclay Road
Croydon
Peter Yaxley
Tipota
Lansmead
Blindly Heath
Lingfield
Surrey
Peterlee College
Peterlee
Co Durham
POC Associates
10–12 Fore Street
Trowbridge
Portals Engineering Ltd
259 Greenstead Road
Colchester
Powys Adult Guidance Service
Spa Road East
Llandrindod Wells
Gwynedd
Powys Adult Guidance Service
Powys County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
Prospect Training
Prospect House
48 Doncaster Road
Mexborough
Prospects
3 The Broadway
Lace Market
Nottingham
PTS
257–259 Commercial Road
Portsmouth
PO1 4BP
Quantum Business Services
Thornton House
Cemetery Road
Shelton
Stoke on Trent
ST4 2NL
RDA Management Services
3 Usk View
Glangrwyney
Crickhowell
Powys
Read Enterprises
Poppy Pastures
10 School Lane
Ropsley
Grantham
NG33 4BT
Ridgemond Training
Ridgemond Park
Telford Avenue
Stevenage
Rite Associates
Trebarvah Woon
Seworgan
Constantine
Falmouth
TR11 5QL
Roger Worth Training
Vanguard House
90 Bank Street
Wakefield
WF1 1EH
Roger Worth
CMA House
Castle Square
Sheffield
SACES
The Oasthouse
Kingston Road
Staines
Middlesex
Scout Enterprises
The Old Gas Works
Dovercourt Road
Horfield
Bristol
BS7 9SL
SEETEC
Main Road
Hockley
SS5 4RG
Selby Training Centre
St. Mary's Old School

Brook Street
Selby
YO8 0HD
SFMA
Uxbridge College
Hayes Centre
Central Avenue
Hayes
UB3 2DD
Skills Training 2000
1 Rosedale Terrace
Dalling Road
London W6
Smith's Personnel House
Robertstown House
Robertstown
Aberdare
Solihull Training Group
Cranmore Avenue
Shirley
Solihull
B90 4LE
Solihull College of Technology
Blossomfield Road
Solihull
South West Management Ltd
10 Beach Road
Weston-super-Mare
South Bristol College
Markesbury Road
Bedminster
Bristol
B53 5JL
South Glamorgan County Council
Adult Education Centre
The Friary
Cardiff
Specialised Technical Services
2–4 Broadway West
Ennis Square
Dormastown
Redcar
Strategic Consultants
5 East Bank Road
Sheffield
S2 3PZ
STS
21 Parkway
Burnt Oak
Edgeware
HA8 5EY
Surrey Heath Adult Education Institute
France Hill Drive
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 3QA
SWIM
Swale Training Centre
10 Crown Quay Lane
Sittingbourne
Kent
Tarka Training
1 Bridge Chambers
The Square
Barnstable
EX31 1HB

TED Training Services Ltd
91 St Ann's Road
Tottenham
London
N15 6NU
TEIFI Counselling Services
Crib-y-Gwynt
Verwig
Cardigan
The Training Factory
Kirkdale House
Kirkdale Road
London
E11 1HF
The Course Centre
13 Lorraine Road
London
N7 6EZ
Thurrock College
Woodview
Grays
RM16 4 YR
Training Advice Centre
47050 Nile Street
Sunderland
Training Network
196 Great Cambridge Road
Enfield
Middlesex
Training in Rural Areas
Training Division
Kilnwell Road
Market Rasen
Lincoln
LN8 3BL
Training and Management Wales
15 Pendragon House
Cwmbran
Training Network
547 Leabridge Road
London
E11 7RB
Trent Valley Business College
Trent House
28 High Street
Long Eaton
Notts
NG10 1LL
TTS Ltd
19a Westgate
Huddesfield
HD1 1NP
TVBC
28 High Street
Long Eaton
Nottingham
Tynedale Business Centre
14 Gilesgate
Hexham
NE46 3NJ
Wandsworth Training Services
79 Wandsworth High Street
Wandsworth
London
SW18 4LQ

WEA
Martins Gate
Bretonside
Plymouth
PL4 0AT
Westcountry Training
Central House
New North Road
Exeter EX4 4HF
WGCC
Job Review Unit
YMCA
Kingsway
Swansea
Wiltshire Training
Education Department
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Workshop 6
82 Countess Road
Sheffield
S1 4TE
Workskills and Latymer Training
59 Fulham High Street
London SW6
Workskills
1 Holly Terrace
Highgate West Hill
London N6 6LX
WTS
79 Wandsworth High Street
Wandsworth
London
SW18 4LQ
Y Training Services
54 Hollybush Lane
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 3TL
Y Training Services
The Stables
77 Hallgarth Street
Durham

Sellafield

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the policy of the Health and Safety Executive in regard to the commissioning process for the thermal oxide reprocessing plant under condition 21(2) of the Sellafield site licence.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: When granting nuclear site licences under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965 (as amended) the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has the power to attach such conditions as may appear to them to be necessary or desirable in the interests of safety. The Health and Safety Executive has developed a set of standardised nuclear site licence conditions with the aim of producing consistent nuclear safety requirements which are non prescriptive and flexible. This allows a nuclear site licensee to exercise responsibility for safety and develop arrangements particular to the circumstances of the operation.

The Health and Safety Executive has satisfied itself that British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) has made and implemented adequate arrangements under condition 21(1) of the Sellafield site licence for the commissioning of plants or processes which may affect safety, and in particular for the thermal oxide reprocessing plant. There has been no requirement for HSE to exercise its powers under condition 21(2).

Labour Statistics

Mr. George: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will estimate the level of unemployment in the Bentley and Darlaston North and Darlaston South wards of Walsall for each year since 1986.

Miss Widdecombe: Unadjusted data on claimant unemployment levels by ward can be obtained from the NOMIS database in the Library.

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many people have been unemployed for over a year in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: In July 1993, the latest available date, the unadjusted number of people who have been claimant unemployed for over one year stood at 1,081,165 compared to 1,356,521 in April 1986.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many jobs have been created in the London borough of Lewisham to date by schemes associated with the South East Thames training and enterprise council.

Miss Widdecombe: The information is not available in the form requested. The main role of training and enterprise councils is not direct job creation but the delivery of Government training programmes, business start-up and such special initiatives as individual TECs see fit.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many vacancies notified in each of the last six months in the London borough of Lewisham were *(a)* full time, *(b)* part time, *(c)* permanent and *(d)* temporary.

Miss Widdecombe: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service Agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. M. Fogden to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated 4 November 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the number and type of vacancies notified to the Employment Service in the London Borough of Lewisham in each of the last six months. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

As we do not record statistical information on a Borough basis, I have produced a "best fit" by using figures from four of my offices within Lewisham namely, Catford, Deptford, Forest Hill and Lewisham. The information is shown in the attached table.

The table shows that total number of vacancies notified to Jobcentres in each of the last six months. We only provide an indept breakdown of the figures on a quarterly basis.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Vacancies notified to employment service offices in Catford, Deptford, Forest Hill and Lewisham

	Month	Full-time	Part-time	Permanent	Temporary
Notified vacancies	—	1,507	150	1,627	30
April	536	—	—	—	—
May	627	—	—	—	—
June	494	—	—	—	—
	—	1,705	178	1,820	63
July	626	—	—	—	—
August	613	—	—	—	—
September	644	—	—	—	—

Shipping Industry

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many people have been employed in the shipping industry in each year since 1979; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: The number of employees in employment in the shipbuilding and ship repairing industry in the United Kingdom is shown in the following table:

Employees in employment in the shipbuilding and ship repairing industry: United Kingdom

	Numbers
September 1981	127,000
September 1984	93,000
September 1987	62,000
September 1989	54,000
September 1991	49,000

Employee estimates at detailed industry level for the United Kingdom are available only from the census of employment.

Age Discrimination

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has to introduce specific legislation to end age discrimination in employment recruitment; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: We are well aware that some employers discriminate on age grounds. This is wasteful and short-sighted. However, legislation does not offer a satisfactory solution. If this country is to prosper employers must, as far as possible, be free to manage their own affairs. Legislation to regulate their behaviour can only be appropriate, therefore, if: *(a)* it would solve a problem, and *(b)* it is the only solution. Experience from abroad confirms that legislation against age discrimination meets neither of these criteria.

The right approach is to persuade employers of the benefits of treating people on merit, regardless of age. Through the work of our advisory group on older workers this is just what we are doing. The recent launch of "Getting On", offering employers a five-point plan to avoid agism, demonstrates our commitment to promoting the interests of older people at work.

Community Action Schemes

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many community action schemes have been approved by his Department for each county area in Wales; and how many extra jobs have been created by each scheme.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service Agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. M. Fogden to Mr. Gareth Wardell, dated 4 November 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the number of Community Action schemes which have been approved for each county area in Wales and the number of extra jobs created by each scheme. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

Unfortunately, I am unable to provide the information you have requested on Community Action for eachWelsh County Area as statistics of this nature are collected through my four Area Offices in Wales. The attached table shows the number of contracts which have been awarded to providing organisations and the number of Community Action places these contracts will create.

Community Action is a new programme of help for people who have been unemployed for 12 months or more. It enables them to gain recent work experience by working on projects of benefit to local communities. An important feature of the programme is structured help in looking for work.

Community Action is not employment but work experience, and the programme will be carefully monitored to ensure that job substitution does not take place. I am confident that the help offered through Community Action will significantly increase participants' chances of finding paid employment.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Community Action Wales

Area	Number of contracts	Places
Mid South	5	259
North Wales	8	197
South East	8	242
South West	7	240
TOTAL		938

Workstart Pilot Schemes

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has to expand the workstart pilot schemes; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: We will evaluate the performance of the existing workstart pilots before deciding whether to extend them.

Mining Safety

Mr. Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many violations of the dust regulations are known or suspected to have occurred in British mines in each of the last three years and so far in 1993.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: According to the Health and Safety Executive's inspectorate of mines, violations of the Respirable Dust Regulations 1975 have occurred at three British mines, one in financial year 1991-92 and two in 1993-94.

Mr. Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of consistency between independent sampling of dust in British mines and the official monitoring carried out by British Coal; and what action he proposes to take.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Respirable Dust Regulations 1975 require mine owners to put in place arrangements to collect and analyse dust samples. The regulations do not require independent sampling of dust to take place in British mines, but British Coal has voluntarily put in place an additional procedure to check on its own statutory dust sampling arrangements, to evaluate the continuing effectiveness of its systems. Some results of such check sampling have been higher than those taken under routine sampling and therefore, in addition to the action that British Coal is taking to establish the reasons for the variation in sample checks, the Health and Safety Executive's inspectorate of mines will be carrying out a full investigation of the procedures for statutory and check samples.

Mr. Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the action taken by Her Majesty's inspectorate of mines in regard to dust sampling in British mines and by granting exemption for working under unsupported roofs and the use of roof bolts.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) inspectorate of mines are responsible for the enforcement of the statutory health and safety regulations which apply in British mines. They have advised me that the prevalence of pneumoconiosis in British coal mines has dropped progressively throughout the last 30 years, and they are satisfied that the Respirable Dust Regulations have been appropriately applied and wish to see the continuance of the downward trend in this disease. The HSE's inspectorate of mines will continue to work with mine owners to ensure compliance with the regulations.

I understand that no exemptions have been issued which allow men to work under unsupported ground. HSE's inspectorate of mines advise me that a district inspector of mines will grant an exemption for the use of rockbolts only after thorough scrutiny of the proposed system by an inspector of mines, and only if he is satisfied that the health and safety of the work force will not be jeopardised.

Mr. Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what action was taken by Her Majesty's inspectorate of mines in regard to the under-reporting of dust counts in British mines which was referred to the inspectorate earlier this year; and when the inspectorate was first aware of the under-reporting.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Dust levels are not routinely notified to the Health and Safety Executive's inspectorate of mines unless they are in excess of the statutory limits. Managers have to record the results of statutory sampling and these are examined by the inspectorate. I understand that the inspectorate first became aware of differences between statutory samples and British Coal's check samples in August. The Chief Inspector of Mines has advised me that these differences are being investigated.

Railway Inspectorate

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the total establishment of the railway inspectorate part of the Health and Safety Executive; and how many staff are in post.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The total establishment of the railway inspectorate is 75. There are 69 staff in post; including one seconded to another division in the Health and Safety Executive.

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many of the staff of the railway inspectorate part of the Health and Safety Executive are deployed on work related to *(a)* the channel tunnel and *(b)* overseas projects.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Four staff are involved in channel tunnel work. The inspectorate is involved only intermittently in overseas projects. When required, three inspectors undertake this work.

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the total establishment of the railway inspectorate part of the Health and Safety Executive deployed on safety on Network SouthEast, London Underground and the docklands light railway; and how many are in post.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: It is difficult to reply precisely to the question since a number of the inspectors involved in the operational and staff safety of these railways have similar responsibilities for other railway businesses.

Youth Training

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish a forecast of expenditure on youth training and training for work in 1993-94; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. David Hunt: I am not able to give forecasts of programme expenditure in year. Planned expenditure by training and enterprise councils (TECs) on youth training (YT) and youth credits in England this year is £704 million. At the end of September £269 million had been spent by TECs which was £69 million less than the anticipated level at that stage of the year.

I expect the rate of spend on YT and youth credits to increase towards the end of the year, although expenditure has been affected by larger numbers of young people staying on at school and college than had been anticipated.

The Government's guarantee of a place on YT stands. At 14 October only 3,322 young people had been waiting for a place for more than eight weeks. This compares with a figure of over 27,000 a year ago.

Planned expenditure on training for work in England this year is £782 million. At the end of September, £313 million had been spent which was £32 million less than the anticipated level.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Parliamentary Feed

Mr. Allen: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make it his policy to accept requests from hon. Members to the Central Office of Information to pay for and receive the same live feed from the Chamber as the Central Office of Information provides for Government Departments.

Mr. Newton: I have been asked to reply.

The authority for providing live feed from the Chamber rests with the Select Committee on Broadcasting and is not at the discretion of the Central Office of Information, which acts as agent on behalf of the Select Committee.

SCOTLAND

Greenwich Mean Time

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to his answer of 27 October, *Official Report*, column 682, in estimated deaths and injuries arising from the use of Greenwich mean time, what is the population (i) in and (ii) not in the northern half of the United Kingdom; if he will estimate the actual number (i) overall and (ii) not in the northern half who may not be killed or injured; and what steps his Department has taken to reconcile their estimates with those of the Policy Studies Institute.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The estimated population of Scotland in mid-1991 was 5,107,000 and for the northern half of the country, to which I referred in my answer to the hon. Member on 27 October at column 682, the corresponding figure is 1,806,000. That answer also indicated that road accident casualty savings for all Scotland from the adoption of central European time might amount to just over 1 per cent. This represents a possible saving of between 260 and 310 casualties based on 1992 figures. These recent estimates of casualty changes arising from adoption of CET are not sufficiently robust as to permit a separate estimate for the northern half of Scotland but the Transport Research Laboratory Report No. 228 indicated an increase in fatal and serious casualties and a decrease in all casualties in the northern half of Scotland during the winter of 1968-70 when British summer time was retained experimentally. Discussions have already taken place between the Scottish Office, the Transport Research Laboratory and the Policy Studies Institute on possible methods of estimating casualty changes from CET. Further work is being undertaken to provide more comprehensive estimates for Scotland but is not yet complete. The results so far obtained are being provided to the Transport Research Laboratory and the Policy Studies Institute to allow them to comment.

Beef Premium Scheme

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations he has had on the practical difficulties involved in the operation of the beef special premium scheme at auction marts.

Sir Hector Monro: My right hon. Friend and I have received correspondence from hon. Members, the Institute of Auctioneers and Appraisers in Scotland, individual auction marts and a number of farmers.

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what plans he has to review the practical difficulties being encountered in the operation of the beef special premium scheme at auction marts;

(2) if he will set up an inquiry into the additional administration involved in the operation in the beef special premium scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro: I am well aware of the burdens the new arrangements for the beef special premium scheme impose on the industry. The United Kingdom, however, had no choice but to implement the scheme according to the EC regulations in order that the beef sector in this country could benefit from the increased rates and coverage of the premium. The Government have no plans to set up an inquiry, but we are pressing the European Commission to look at the future operation of the scheme with a view to its simplification.

Health Boards

Ms Rachel Squire: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Argyll and Clyde health board including the successful tenderer and the value of the contract;

(2) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Ayrshire and Arran health board including the successful tenderer and the value of the contract;

(3) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Highland health board including the successful tenderer and the value of the contract;

(4) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Greater Glasgow health board including the successful tenderer and the value of the contract;

(5) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Grampian health board including the successful tenderer and the value of the contract.

Mr. Stewart: The information in the table is in respect of contracts awarded between 1988 and 31 October 1993.

Service type and hospital	Contractor	Tender value £'000s
ARYLL AND CLYDE HEALTH BOARD		
Catering		
Dumbarton Group	In-house	580
Argyll and Bute, Mid Argyll, Lochgilphead	In-house	308
Domestic		
Rankin Maternity/Inverclyde	In-house	143
Dumbarton Hospitals and Community	In-house	748
Renfrew Community	In-house	172
Hotel		
Merchiston, Edlerslie and Johnstone	In-house	526
Oban	In-house	423
Ravenscraig	In-house	495
Dykebar, Hawkhead, Barshaw, Gilmour, Westward, Paisley	In-house	1,383
Lochgilphead	In-house	440
Royal Alexandra	Mediguard	1,627
Inverclyde Royal	In-house	1,000
Inverclyde Community	In-house	121
Dunoon General	In-house	283
Portering		
Dumbarton and Helensburgh	In-house	189
Inverclyde Royal	In-house	384
Royal Alexandra	In-house	482
Transport		
Argyll and Dumbarton	In-house	138
Renfrew and Inverclyde	In-house	227
Painterwork		
Dumbarton	John Miller & Son	34
Argyll	In-house	48
Dumbarton	John Miller & Son	—
Argyll	Capital Decorator	—
Renfrew Acute Unit	In-house	46
Renfrew Acute Unit	John Miller & Son	—
Renfrew Priority	In-house	84
Renfrew Priority	John Miller & Son	—
Inverclyde, Cowal and Bute	Trident Maintenance Services	49
Inverclyde, Cowal and Bute	Capital Decorator	—
Ground Maintenance		
Rothesay, Dunoon, Inverclyde	In-house	106
Renfrew Acute Unit	In-house	44
Renfrew Priority Unit	In-house	84
AYRSHIRE AND ARRAN		
Catering		
Crosshouse	In-house	779
Ayrshire Central	In-house	516
Domestic		
Crosshouse	In-house	765
Ayrshire Central	In-house	401
Hotel		
North Clinics and Health Centres	In-house	55
Kirklandside	In-house	401
Ballochmyle/Holmhead	In-house	1,142
Ailsa	In-house	1,399
Ayrshire Central/Ravenspark	In-house	947
Biggart/Thornyflat	In-house	537
Davidson Cottage	In-house	100
Crosshouse	In-house	692
South Clinics and Health Centres	In-house	43
Painterwork		
All Board	Moss Painting	195
	Baxter & Gillespie	56
	Baxter & Gillespie	28
Vehicle Maintenance		
All Board	In-house	121

Service type and hospital	Contractor	Tender value £'000s
Laundry		
All Board	In-house	945
HIGHLAND		
Catering		
Mental Health Unit	In-house	486
Raigmore/Royal Northern	In-house	639
Domestic		
Royal Northern	In-house	75
Mental Health Unit	In-house	483
Inverness Clinic	In-house	32
Hotel		
Caithness Unit	In-house	387
Sutherland Unit	In-house	204
Southern Unit	In-house	1,109
Laundry		
Northern Unit	John O'Groat	42
GREATER GLASGOW		
Catering		
Gartnavel Royal/General	In-house	1,376
Parkside/Duke Street	In-house	326
Glasgow Royal	Sodexho	1,552
RHSC Yorkhill/Queen Mother's	In-house	468
Canniesburn/Drumchapel	In-house	449
Southern General/Darnley	In-house	1,303
Leverndale/Cowglen	In-house	775
Ruchill/Birdston/Broomhill/Lenzie	In-house	654
Stobhill	In-house	1,204
Glasgow Royal/Rutherglen Maternity	In-house	309
Woodilee/Stoneyetts	In-house	419
Victoria/Royal Samaritan	In-house	841
Knightswood	In-house	331
Gartloch	In-house	448
Mearnskirk/Philipshill	In-house	424
Belvidere/Lightburn	In-house	429
Western Infirmary	In-house	746
Domestic		
Stobhill	Hospital Hygiene	820
Victoria Group	Hospital Hygiene	592
Gartloch/Parkhead	In-house	460
Belvidere/Duke Street/Lightburn	In-house	432
Gartnavel Royal	Sunlight	360
Royal Maternity and Rutherglen Maternity	Initial	266
Mearnskirk/Philipshill	In-house	291
Western Infirmary	In-house	548
Gartnavel General	Initial	312
Canniesburn/Drumchapel	Initial	249
Woodilee/Stoneyetts	Initial	332
Royal Infirmary	Hospital Hygiene	954
Gartnavel General	Initial	315
Ruchill/Birston/Broomhill/Lenzie	In-house	416
Knightswood/Blanarthill/Duntocher	In-house	190
Southern General/Cowglen/Darnley	In-house	857
RHSC Yorkhill/Queen Mother's	In-house	426
Leverndale	In-house	502
Community		
South Sector	Olscot Ltd.	96
North East Sector	Olscot Ltd.	86
North West Sector	Olscot Ltd.	95
Hotel		
Lennoxcastle/Waverley Park	In-house	1,598
Portering		
Glasgow Royal	Mediguard	511
Western Infirmary	In-house	477
Mearnskirk/Philipshill	In-house	140
Southern General	Sunlight	708
Knightswood	In-house	89
Gartnavel Royal	Hospital Hygiene	164
Leverndale	Mediguard	175

Service type and hospital	Contractor	Tender value £'000s
Stobhill	Hospital Hygiene	527
RHSC Queen Mother's	Sunlight	258
Woodilee/Stoneyetts	In-house	150
Royal Maternity/Rutherglen Maternity	Hospital Hygiene	185
Ruchill	Sunlight	253
Cannisburn/Drumchapel	In-house	307
Belvidere, Duke Street/Lightburn	Sunlight	378
Victoria Group	In-house	339
Community Care Unit	In-house	237
Gartloch/Parkhead	In-house	209
Painterwork		
Community Primary Care Unit	Hat Painting Ltd.	60
Yorkhill Hospitals	MacLean & Speirs	39
Mental Health Unit	Hat Painting Ltd.	304
Royal Infirmary Unit	MacLean & Speirs	111
Care of the Elderly Unit	Fitzroy Building	63
Stobhill	Hat Painting Ltd.	150
Southern General	MacLean & Speirs	91
Ground Maintenance		
Royal Infirmary	CBC Lands Division	29
Stobhill	P & D Services	70
Community Primary Care	OCS Cleanmaster	39
Western Infirmary/Yorkhill	In-house	29
Victoria Infirmary	CBC Lands Division	34
Southern General	CBC Lands Division	57
Mental Health Unit	In-house	201
Care of the Elderly	CBC Lands Division	57
Boiler Maintenance		
All Board	In-house	1,428
Laundry and Linen		
Southern General	In-house	1,269
Knightswood	In-house	1,568
Ruchill	In-house	1,701
GRAMPIAN		
Catering		
Geriatric and Specialist Services Unit	In-house	879
Mental Health Unit	In-house	940
West Unit	In-house	541
Community Unit	In-house	564
Domestic		
Geriatric and Specialist Services Unit	Mediguard	805
Mental Health Unit	Mediguard	885
West Unit	In-house	468
Community Unit	Mediguard	473
Hotel		
Foresterhill	In-house	3,475
Community Health Services	In-house	2,253
West Unit	In-house	123
Portering		
Mental Health Unit	In-house	146
Transport		
All Board	In-house	396
Painterwork		
Foresterhill	In-house	742
Ground Maintenance		
West Unit	In-house	28
Foresterhill	In-house	129
Management of Care		
City Hospital/Geriatric Unit	CHS Tender	2,356

Nursery Education

Sir David Steel: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the provision of nursery education in Scotland.

Mr. Lang: The Government have no plans to impose a statutory duty on education authorities to provide nursery education. In our view local authorities are best able to decide the most appropriate level of nursery school provision in their areas, taking into account local needs and circumstances. The Government provide local authorities with resources to fund education through the aggregate external finance settlement. Under these arrangements, local authorities have the opportunity to increase nursery education spending where they view this as a priority.

Rannoch Moor

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what was the outcome of his action relating to the denial of public access to part of the public footpath across Rannoch moor referred to in his letter to the hon. Member for Nottingham, North of 30 June.

Sir Hector Monro: In Scotland the duty to assert, protect and keep open any public rights of way lies with regional and district planning authorities, in this case Highland regional council. I understand that the regional council is seeking to reach agreement with the landowner over the creation of an alternative route to the existing right of way. When such an agreement is reached, the regional council will require to make a public path diversion order, in terms of section 35 of the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967. Until such an order is made by the local authority and confirmed by the Secretary of State, an existing public right of way will continue to exist.

Public Bodies

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if his Department holds a register from which appointments are made to non-departmental public bodies in Scotland.

Mr. Lang: Yes. The Scottish Office public appointments list is one source of names for appointments to non-departmental public bodies.

Ewe Premium

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many farmers in Scotland are currently eligible for ewe annual premium payments; how many claims for payment have been received; how many have been paid; and when those outstanding claims will be paid.

Sir Hector Monro: I have no figures regarding the number of sheep farmers who are eligible to apply. Some 17,000 claims have been received under the 1993 scheme and about 11,500 have been paid the first and second advances, together with the less favoured area supplement where appropriate. Outstanding eligible claims will be paid as soon as possible.

Lobster Creels

Mr. Morley: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the damage done to lobster creels by seals.

Sir Hector Monro: While I am aware of reports from Scottish fishermen that seals have damaged their creels, my scientists at the marine laboratory in Aberdeen have not investigated them in view of the practical difficulties of obtaining firm evidence of how the damage was caused.

Libraries

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many public libraries in Scotland are open for 60 hours a week or more.

Sir Hector Monro: The Scottish Office does not collect this information. However, according to the Library Statistics 1993 published by the library and information statistics unit at Loughborough university of technology, 36 public libraries in Scotland were open for 60 hours a week or more in the year 1991-92.

Estuarial Crossings

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland which estuarial crossings have received central Government assistance in the form of grant, loan or debt write-off or suspension; and how much assistance has been given, and in what form, in each case.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The majority of estuarial crossings in Scotland have been financed directly by central government as elements of the trunk road programme, including the tolled road bridge at Erskine. The Forth road bridge, which opened in 1964, attracted a grant from central government of £4·65 million towards initial capital expenditure and a loan of £14·5 million on which interest payments of some £1·66 million were waived during construction; and additional £7·1 million of unpaid interest between 1964 and 1984 was capitalised and added to the loan. It is expected that the full outstanding debt will be repaid by May 1995. The Tay road bridge, which opened in 1966, received loans from central government totalling £3·97 million; the sum of these loans outstanding in May 1993 was £3·36 million.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland which estuarial crossings are the responsibility of *(a)* central Government, *(b)* local authorities and *(c)* private owners; and which of these are (i) subject to tolls and (ii) not subject to tolls.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The majority of estuarial crossings in Scotland are the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Scotland as part of the trunk road network, and are not subject to tolls. Tolls are charged on the Erskine, Forth and Tay road bridges where the responsible authorities are as follows:

Erskine road bridge—Secretary of State for Scotland.
Forth road bridge—Forth road bridge joint board (Fife and Lothian regional councils).
Tay road bridge—Tay road bridge joint board (Fife and Tayside regional councils).

Arable Crops

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland which EC countries have overshot the regional base areas for arable crops; and what action they have taken regarding this matter.

Sir Hector Monro: Comprehensive statistics on claims made in other EC member states under the arable payments

scheme as part of the integrated administration and control system have not yet been made available by the EC Commission.

A1 (Speed Cameras)

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the operation of speed cameras on the A1 road; and at what vehicle speeds the cameras are triggered on *(a)* single and *(b)* dual carriageway sections.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: Since the introduction of speed detection cameras on the A1 on 30 August this year initial monitoring of traffic flows indicates a very encouraging trend. The number of cars exceeding the speed limit has been approximately halved while the number of HGVs exceeding speed limits has dropped by one third.

The police are responsible for the setting of speed detection cameras and their day to day operation. It is not considered to be in the public interest to disclose the threshold speed above which photographs of offending vehicles are taken. Furthermore, these thresholds can be varied at short notice.

Farming Census Forms

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the number of farmers, who *(a)* received and *(b)* returned the 4 June statistical census forms in (i) 1989, (ii) 1990 and (iii) 1991.

Sir Hector Monro: The June agricultural census relates to main holdings only. The number of forms issued and received was:

Year	*Issued*	*Received*
1989	26,760	24,803
1990	27,166	25,003
1991	30,902	28,652

Note: In addition to the June census, an annual minor holdings sample survey is conducted in May. The classification of holdings into main or minor is regularly reviewed.

Housing Association Tenants Ombudsman

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what powers will be afforded the Housing Association Tenants Ombudsman for Scotland.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The main role of the independent Housing Association Tenants Ombudsman for Scotland, to be appointed by Scottish Homes with effect from 1 December, will be to investigatge complaints from individual tenants covering allegations of maladministration in all registered housing associations in Scotland. The appointment will be non-statutory, and the Ombudsman himself will have no specific powers, but findings in favour of tenants can be followed up by Scottish Homes under its existing powers of supervision. The non-statutory basis of the appointment will be kept under review.

Hospital Waste Incinerators

Mr. Graham: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) how many hospitals in Scotland have their own waste incinerators;

(2) what plans he has to allow NHS hospitals to incinerate commercial waste;

(3) whether NHS trust hospitals which have incinerators will be allowed to burn commercial waste; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as possible and place a copy of the signed letter in the Libraries of the House.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing, for each of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department, whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Libraries of the House.

Travellers

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will set out the definition of travelling people used for the purposes of the guidance given to local authorities.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 25 October 1993]:* Section 13 of the Local Government and Planning (Scotland) Act 1982 defines travellers as "persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin".

Criminal Injuries Compensation

Mr. Graham: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what was the total amount awarded by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in each of the past five years; what was *(a)* the average award concerning violent criminal acts against the person and *(b)* the average award to victims of rape;

(2) how many cases were judged by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in each of the past five years; and what was the average waiting time for the completion of an application.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answers 1 November 1993]:* The latest available information is summarised in the table. This is taken from the published annual reports of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, copies of which are held in the Library of the House. The board does not collate details of the average time taken to complete claims, but percentages of cases resolved within various periods of time are given in the board's annual reports. All awards made by the board are in respect of crimes of violence, but information about the average award made to victims of rape is not recorded centrally.

Financial year	*Cases resolved*	*Compensation paid (£ million)*	*Average award (£)*
1987-88	29,153	52·043	2,479
1988-89	38,830	69·381	2,500
1989-90	38,620	72·722	2,604

Financial year	Cases resolved	Compensation paid (£ million)	Average award (£)
1990-91	53,384	109·330	3,107
1991-92	60,113	143·660	3,660

Ambulance Staff

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what was the number of ambulance staff employed by the NHS in 1990, 1991 and 1992, expressed as a whole-time equivalent.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) on 25 October at column *482*.

Victim Support

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the level of funding for victim support in the current financial year; what plans he has to increase the sum in future financial years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Scottish Office funding to the Scottish Association of Victim Support Schemes has risen from £600 in 1984-85 to £764,000 for the current financial year.

Decisions have not yet been made regarding funding for 1994-95 of future years.

These will be taken in the light of competing priorities but in line with the Government's continuing policy to improve services to victims of crime.

HEALTH

Eating Disorders

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research is being undertaken into the causes, treatment and cure for bulimia and anorexia nervosa.

Mr. David Davis: I have been asked to reply.

The Medical Research Council (MRC), which receives its grant-in-aid from the Office of Science and Technology, is currently supporting a research project into eating disorders by the department of clinical pharmacology at Oxford university. In addition, the MRC recently funded a controlled trial of psychological treatment of adolescent anorexia nervosa, based at the Institute of Psychiatry, London, and a study of the outcome of bulimia nervosa, at the university of Oxford. The MRC is also supporting a considerable amount of basic research which may have some relevance to bulimia and anorexia nervosa, and the council is always willing to consider scientifically sound proposals for research in competition with other applications. No information is held centrally on other relevant work which the universities' medical schools or medical research charities may be supporting.

Drug Withdrawals

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library a list of licensed drugs which have been found to be harmful to human health and subsequently withdrawn from the market in the last 10 years.

Mr. Sackville: This subject has been reviewed in the literature by Spriet-Poulla and Auriche in a book called Drug Safety published in 1988 by PJB publications. Copies of the relevant information will be placed in the Library. This covers the period from 1961 to 1987. Since that time the principal drugs withdrawn in the United Kingdom on safety grounds have been as follows:

L-tryptophan (Optimax, Pacitron)
Metipranolol (Glauline)
Prostaglandin E2 pessary (Propess)
Terodiline (Micturin)
Triazolam (Halcion)
Temafloxacin (Teflox)
Human monoclonal anibody (Centoxin)
Flosequinan (Manoplax)

Primary Care

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what geographical inequalities she has identified in primary care expenditure in England; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: Information about the pattern of family health services authority expenditure on primary care services is published annually in Health Service Indicators, copies of which are available in the Library. The same volume also includes some data on the community health services. I also refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 1 November at column *60*.

VAT (Domestic Fuel)

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what planning the NHS Management Executive has undertaken in light of the proposed increase in VAT on fuel.

Mr. Sackville: None. I refer the hon. Member to the replies that I gave her on 2 November and 3 November.

Tobacco-related Illnesses

Sir Russell Johnston: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the annual cost of treating tobacco-related illness.

Mr. Sackville: Treatment costs to the national health service are estimated to be £437 million annually. This figure is for hospital costs only and does not include the costs of the care given by general practitioners or at health clinics or other care in the community.

Sir Russell Johnston: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the annual cost of working days lost through tobacco-related illness.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that my hon. Friend the Minister for Health gave to the hon. Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Mrs. Dunwoody) on 26 January at column *697*.

GP Fund Holders

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 25 October, *Official Report*, columns *494-95*, whether a general practitioner's fund-holding practice is permitted to pool part of its budget with *(a)* other fund-holding practices or *(b)* the local district health authority to enable one-off or extra-contractual referrals to be purchased in such a way as to ensure equity of treatment for patients of fund-holding and non fund-holding general practitioners.

Dr. Mawhinney: General practitioner fund holders and district health authorities are funded in as similar a way as possible, allowing for different population sizes. They do not therefore need to pool their budgets. But both fund holders and districts should be working to achieve the highest quality of care for their patients and can jointly agree common standards in contracts for hospital treatment.

Geriatric Patients

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many geriatric patients were admitted to hospital as a result of iatrogenic disease in the latest year for which figures are available.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Repetitive Strain Injury

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the available evidence about the medical background to repetitive strain injury.

Mr. Sackville: There is no medical consensus on whether repetitive strain injury is a single syndrome or a collection of differing conditions; nor is there general agreement on its cause or treatment.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what medical research has been conducted by her Department into repetitive strain injury.

Mr. Sackville: The main agency through which the Government support biomedical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC), which receives its grant-in-aid from the office of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. I understand that the MRC is not currently supporting any research specifically into repetitive strain injury (RSI), but is always willing to consider scientifically based sound proposals for research. The prospects for funding of research into RSI will, therefore, depend on the nature of any applications received.

Mental Illness

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the statistics for each year from 1987 relating to the number of people who having been detained in a mental institution for any period longer than a week since 1980, either *(a)* took their own lives or *(b)* were subsequently convicted of murder or manslaughter.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Heart Pacemakers

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines were given to hospitals in recalling patients fitted with pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93.

Mr. Sackville: The guidelines given to hospitals in recalling patients fitted with pacemaker lead models 1010T, 1050T and the Prototype T93, were set out in the Department of Health's Pacemaker Technical Note No. 48, a copy of which will be placed in the Library.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many patients in *(a)* Lewisham, *(b)* London and *(c)* nationwide have had pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93 removed and replaced;

(2) how many patients in *(a)* Lewisham, *(b)* London and *(c)* nationwide were fitted with pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93.

Mr. Sackville: A total of 4,429 pacemaker leads of models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype T93 have been fitted in the United Kingdom and 235 replaced. Individual patient information is not available centrally.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when Siemens, the manufacturers of pacemakers 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93, warned her Department that these models had faults.

Mr. Sackville: On 22 January 1993.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in *(a)* Lewisham, *(b)* London and *(c)* nationwide have died since being fitted with pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93; and what has been the cause of death in each case.

Mr. Sackville: A total of 314 patients nationwide have died since being fitted with pacemaker lead models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype T93. The cause of death in less than 1 per cent. of these patients has been identified as being related to the pacemaker lead. The residue were due to a variety of pacemaker-unrelated causes. Individual patient information is not held centrally.

Tobacco Advertising

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is her policy on the banning of tobacco and cigarette advertisements.

Mr. Sackville: The Government believe that the imposition of a ban on all forms of advertising of a product which it is legal to sell would be a major change of principle which would need to be justified in terms of the likely size of any effect. The Government remain to be convinced that sufficient evidence is presently available to provide such justification, although it is considering the responses received to the Department of Health report on the effect of tobacco advertising on tobacco consumption.

Child Migrant Trust

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on what she found out about the work of the Child Migrant Trust during her visit to Sydney in September.

Mr. Bowis: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 25 October at columns *501-2*.

Bogus Marriages

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Shersby) of 28 April, *Official Report*, columns *448-49*, on marriages for immigration purposes, how many of the cases in the London borough of Lewisham which were reported to the Registrar General were passed on to the Home Office; and how many of those complaints were proven.

Mr. Sackville: The Registrar General passed on to the Home Office 27 of the cases reported to him in the London borough of Lewisham.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department has provided the following information about the 27 cases passed to his office:

11 cases: No further action taken immediately.

14 cases: Information referred to case working groups to be taken into account in the consideration of outstanding applications for further leave to remain.

2 cases: Referred for immediate enforcement action; one case involved the subject of a deportation order and the other an illegal entrant.

Working Days Lost

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the total number of working days lost through sickness, ill health and injury in 1992-93 and the estimated total cost of that absence from work.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the total number of working days lost through problems of mental health in 1992-93 and the estimated total cost of that absence from work.

Mr. Bowis: I understand that there were some 105,849,000 days of certified incapacity for sickness/invalidity benefit caused by mental disorders in the period 1 April 1991 to 4 April 1992; the latest year for which statistics are available.

No estimate has been made of the total public expenditure or the costs to employers associated with this absence.

Neo-natal Intensive Care

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she intends to respond to the report of the clinical standards advisory group on neo-natal intensive care.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health, on behalf of the United Kingdom Health Departments, published the Government's response to the reports of the Clinical Standards Advisory Group on Access to and Availability of Specialist Services, including Neonatal Intensive Care, on 6 July. Copies of the response and of the reports are available in the Library.

Lister Hospital, Stevenage

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she has taken to guarantee that the privatisation of pathology services at Lister hospital in Stevenage has no detrimental impact upon the availability of those services to local patients;

(2) what representations she has received regarding the privatisation of pathology services at the Lister hospital in Stevenage.

Mr. Sackville: We have received several letters about the decision announced by the North Herts Trust that its pathology services will be provided by the independent sector. It is for trusts to assess and make decisions on the nature of their pathology provision to meet the requirements of their purchasers. We understand that the North Herts Trust expects the new arrangement to improve services for its patients.

Hypothermia

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many deaths from hypothermia took place in each region in 1992 among *(a)* men aged 65 years and over and *(b)* women aged 60 years and over.

Mr. Sackville: The information is shown in the table.

Numbers of deaths with mention of hypothermia on the death certificate for men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over by regional health authority of usual residence for 1992

Regional health authority	*Men aged 65 years and over*	*Women aged 60 years and over*
Northern	6	16
Yorkshire	7	19
Trent	14	15
East Anglian	8	12
North West Thames	11	12
North East Thames	13	22
South East Thames	11	9
South West Thames	9	15
Wessex	5	13
Oxford	5	6
South Western	9	19
West Midlands	18	20
Mersey	3	9
North Western	11	15
Wales	8	11

Child Protection

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how local authorities should fund the work of area child protection committees.

Mr. Bowis: Local authorities should allocate funds to Area Child Protection Committees in accordance with the guidance contained in "Working Together under the Children Act 1989". Copies of the guidance are available in the Library.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if young people accommodated under section 20(3) of the Children Act 1989 are entitled to housing benefit.

Mr. Bowis: Matters relating to entitlement to housing benefit are for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will issue guidance to advise local authorities as to the membership of area child protection committees following the changes to the health service.

Mr. Bowis: "Working Together under the Children Act 1989", the Government guide to arrangements for

inter-agency co-operation for the protection of children from abuse, gives guidance on area child protection committees including membership.

Copies of the guide are available in the Library.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to monitor the effect of changes to the health service and education on inter-agency working in child protection.

Mr. Bowis: A multi-disciplinary group in the Department of Health has undertaken a study in a representative sample of district health authorities in England to examine the way in which child protection services are being contracted and provided in the light of the national health service reforms. The Department will consider the findings of this study and those of various research studies which will provide information on inter-agency working in child protection.

Salmonella

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent evidence she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* received on the causes of salmonella food poisoning.

Mr. Sackville: A number of research/surveillance projects have been commissioned which will aid surveillance and throw further light on the sources of human salmonella infection. The largest is a study of infectious intestinal disease in England being carried out on behalf of the steering group on the microbiological safety of food which will provide more information on the sources and true incidence of salmonella infection. Initial results from the study are expected in 1994-95. Other steering group surveillance studies across the food chain specifically look for salmonella, with a view to identifying where contamination occurs and can be controlled.

The advisory committee on the microbiological safety of food (ACMSF) has assessed the contribution made by eggs to human foodborne salmonellosis. The ACMSF report on salmonella in eggs was published on 9 February 1993: copies will be placed in the Library. The ACMSF is currently reviewing hygiene practices in the poultrymeat industry. Such a review will include an assessment of the possible links between poultrymeat and human foodborne disease. The ACMSF expects to report to the United Kingdom Health and Agriculture Ministers in mid-1994.

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) on what health evidence recommendations for the storage and handling of eggs are based; and if she will make a statement;

(2) on what specific evidence it was concluded in cases of salmonella food poisoning where foods containing eggs were found to be the source that the source of salmonella in the food was eggs rather than any other potential source; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The role of eggs in human salmonellosis was considered in depth by the advisory committee on the microbiological safety of food, whose report "Salmonella in Eggs" was published on 9 February 1993, and included recommendations about the storage and handling of eggs. Copies of the report and the Government's response which endorsed these recommendations are available in the Library.

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what specific evidence the Chief Medical Officer bases the health warnings given on eggs; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The then Chief Medical Officer issued advice, 88/285, to the public on the safe handling of eggs on 26 August 1988.

This advice was endorsed by the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food in their report "Salmonella in Eggs", published on 9 February 1993.

Copies of the advice and report will be placed in the Library.

Intensive Care, Manchester

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in how many recent cases in Greater Manchester people with life-threatening conditions and in need of intensive care have been referred to hospitals outside the conurbation; to which hospitals they were referred; what assessment she has made as to the adequacy of intensive care provision in the conurbation for the coming winter months; what actions she will be taking; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: We are aware of four such cases. Three were referred to Blackpool Victoria hospital, the other to Burnley general hospital.

Purchasers of health care are responsible for ensuring the availability of a comprehensive range of services, within available resources. It is for them to decide, in discussion with providers, how best to meet the need for intensive care facilities.

The Government are currently funding a study by the Royal College of Anaesthetists, in consultation with the Intensive Care Society and other royal colleges, into access to intensive care.

Intensive Care (Children)

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to publish the Government's survey on children's intensive care, drawn up by the British Paediatric Association.

Mr. Bowis: Publication of the report is a matter for the British Paediatric Association, which carried out the survey.

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in how many cases infants in need of intensive care have been referred to intensive care units for adults; what steps she is taking to ensure more availability of paediatric intensive care facilities; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: I will write to the hon. Member.

Staff

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the number of *(a)* administrative and clerical staff, *(b)* managerial staff and *(c)* nursing and midwifery staff employed in each region in 1992.

Dr. Mawhinney: The information requested is shown in the table.

Nurses and midwives (excluding agency), general/senior managers and administrative and clerical staff by region in England at 30 September 1992 in whole time equivalents

Region	Nurses and midwives	General/ senior managers	Admin and clerical
Northern	25,120	710	7,590
Yorkshire	27,560	1,350	9,020
Trent	35,790	1,040	10,900
East Anglian	15,390	650	4,290
North West Thames	24,770	940	9,500
North East Thames	31,250	1,560	10,370
South East Thames	28,570	1,090	9,880
South West Thames	22,380	520	7,470
Wessex	22,170	970	6,540
Oxford	16,370	760	5,910
South Western	26,160	840	8,360
West Midlands	41,320	1,730	13,010
Mersey	19,390	860	6,240
North Western	35,290	1,250	11,200
SHAs	7,210	460	2,600
Others	50	1,940	12,120
England	378,790	16,690	134,990

Source: Department of Health form KM49.
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Notes:
1. The figures for all regions include those in National Health Service trusts.
2. "Others" include the London Ambulance Service, family health service authorities and other statutory authorities.
3. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
4. The number of administrative staff and clerical staff has increased over the past few years—reflecting both the strengthening of administrative functions such as information technology and personnel together with increased support to clinical services.
5. General and senior managers numbers have grown over the past few years—reflecting the planned introduction of management posts in a series of phased implementations since 1986.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* managers and *(b)* clerical and administrative staff have been employed by each regional health authority in each year since 1989.

Dr. Mawhinney: I will write to the hon. Member.

Water Fluoridation

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the estimated capital cost of £1,300,000 for the fluoridation of water referred to in the press release issued by the Northern regional health authority on 26 October will be centrally funded; and what proportion will come from funds already committed to the regional health authority.

Dr. Mawhinney: It is not possible to say at this stage what part, if any, of the estimated costs will be met by the Department.

Suicide

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many suicides were reported of patients receiving *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* out-patient psychiatric care in each of the last five years for which figures are available, in each region.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Patients Charter

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals have *(a)* succeeded and *(b)* failed to meet each of the targets in the patients charter in each region in each quarter since they were introduced.

Dr. Mawhinney: Data on performance by individual hospitals against patients charter rights and standards is not available centrally, although a package of key data is collected about the performance of district health authorities. Information about the performance of individual hospitals in this area during 1992-93 has recently been published by district health authorities in the form of patients charter annual reports. Copies of reports can be obtained from the district health authority concerned.

Sessional Fees (Benefits)

Mrs. Ray Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will give details of the scheme agreed with the British Medical Association for the payment of sessional fees to medical practitioners for providing information relating to benefits which require medical assessment, including details of the fee agreed and those participating; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: Hospital consultants may charge a fee for examinations and reports for third parties which do not form part of their normal contractual national health service duties relating to the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness. The determination of that fee is a matter for the practitioner and the third party concerned. Fees for any such examinations or reports provided to the Benefits Agency are a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security.

Influenza Vaccine

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made as to the adequacy of stocks of influenza vaccine for the coming winter months; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The Government are making every effort to ensure the adequacy of stocks of influenza vaccine for the forthcoming winter, and is being assisted in this by the vaccine manufacturers. Supplies already issued this year are close to the level reached for the entire programme last year and further supplies are likely to be available shortly. However, it is essential that the vaccines that are used routinely have been licensed by the Medicines Control Agency and have met recognised standards for potency and purity.

Patient Complaints

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many formal complaints were made by patients in each region in each year since 1987; and what were the major categories of complaints received;

(2) how many patient complaints were *(a)* received and *(b)* investigated by her Department from each of the health regions in each of the last five years; and what were the major categories of complaints.

Dr. Mawhinney *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* The Department of Health does not deal with complaints

directly from patients. The table sets out the number of formal complaints made in the hospital and community health services by patients for each of the national health service regions. Information about the number of formal complaints made to family health services authorities is not available centrally. National figures of the number of formal investigations concluded by FHSAs are in the publication "Health and Social Services Statistics", copies of which are available in the Library.

Number of written complaints, 1987-88 to 1991-92, for each regional health authority and England

Region	1987-88		1988-89		1989-90		1990-91		1991-92	
	Hospital	Community	Hospital	Community	Hospital	Community	Hospital	Community	Hospital	Community
England	29,956	5,030	28,935	4,338	31,470	4,700	32,996	4,307	44,680	6,399
Northern	1,346	387	1,226	320	1,460	290	1,892	149	2,236	369
Yorkshire	2,068	247	1,805	210	2,040	193	2,169	215	2,466	313
Trent	2,191	454	2,109	289	2,729	241	2,395	377	3,328	444
East Anglian	885	80	1,019	85	1,002	205	1,345	159	1,718	159
North West	2,565	371	2,382	242	2,965	383	3,154	379	4,038	467
Thames North East	3,739	545	3,763	354	3,858	492	3,766	441	5,553	479
Thames South East	2,997	301	2,753	323	2,047	209	2,247	268	4,878	594
Thames South West	2,115	891	2,124	819	2,464	746	2,552	297	3,172	893
Wessex	1,497	448	1,632	210	1,735	374	1,687	375	2,649	377
Oxford	991	72	1,301	70	1,379	92	1,502	320	1,489	239
South Western	1,592	218	1,335	282	1,689	375	1,971	277	2,321	210
West Midlands	3,375	476	2,708	533	3,378	516	3,246	612	4,054	1,046
Mersey	1,333	176	1,566	237	1,423	231	1,281	224	2,216	91
North Western	2,718	364	2,667	364	2,703	351	3,020	214	3,763	712
SHAs	544	0	545	0	598	2	769	0	799	6

NATIONAL FINANCE

Value Added Tax

11. **Mrs. Helen Jackson:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact that widening VAT would have on the spending power of those whose earnings are below the basic rate income tax threshold.

Sir John Cope: The impact would depend on the precise categories of goods to which VAT was extended and the rate of tax chosen.

13. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received in the last month concerning value added tax; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: A number of representations have been received about value added tax. It would not be appropriate to make a statement before 30 November.

18. **Ms Coffey:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the increase to the average family's tax bill that will occur following the VAT changes outlined in the March Budget.

Sir John Cope: Standard rate VAT on domestic fuel and power applied to the average household's existing fuel bill would cost about £2·30 per week.

21. **Mr. Austin-Walker:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received regarding the possible imposition of VAT on books, newspapers and other publications.

Sir John Cope: Ministers have received a number of representations from all sectors of the publishing industry and from various educational establishments about VAT and reading matter. These will be carefully considered in the run-up to the budget.

23. **Mr. McAllion:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the items currently zero rated for VAT.

Sir John Cope: Not before 30 November.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what have been the changes in the rates of VAT since the beginning of 1979; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: At the beginning of 1979 there were two positive rates of VAT, 8 and 12·5 per cent. On 18 June 1979 these were replaced by a single rate of 15 per cent. which was increased to 17·5 per cent. on 1 April 1991.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer from how many businesses Customs and Excise has withdrawn use of the VAT cash accounting scheme in each of the last five years for which statistics are available; how many businesses entering the scheme in each year have withdrawn from it at the order of Customs and Excise; how many businesses in total were taken on to the scheme in each of the last five years, including new registrations and re-registration; and against how many times in each of the last five years Customs and Excise has been party to bankruptcy proceedings on account of poor VAT payments.

Sir John Cope *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Figures are not available for the number of businesses from whom Customs and Excise has withdrawn use of the VAT cash accounting scheme or how many businesses entering the scheme in each year have withdrawn from it at the order of Customs and Excise. Formal approval for entry to

the scheme is no longer required. The number of businesses approved to start using cash accounting in each of the last five years was:

Year to 31 March	Take-up
1989	21,674
1990	26,097
1991	33,778
1992	23,782
[1]1993	19,485

[1] Figures from February onwards are not available.

Figures on bankruptcies are available for the last three financial years only:

Year to 31 March	Number of bankruptcy petitions presented by Customs and Excise	Number of bankruptcy orders made
1991	4,674	1,394
1992	5,601	3,025
1993	9,245	4,006

Housing

12. **Mr. Lewis:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what fiscal measures he proposes to stimulate the housing market.

Mr. Nelson: My right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will set out our fiscal plans in the Budget statement on 30 November.

Business Taxation

14. **Mrs. Angela Knight:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what evidence he has on the effects of the business taxation regime on inward investment into the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Dorrell: In 1992 the United Kingdom was the largest recipient of foreign direct investment of all the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries.

Life Assurance

16. **Mr. John Greenway:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received on the need for reform of the taxation of life assurance.

Mr. Dorrell: The Government are evaluating the changes to life assurance taxation introduced in 1989. Interested bodies have been invited to contribute.

Public Spending

17. **Mr. Thurnham:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to control public spending.

Mr. Portillo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to my earlier reply to the hon. Member for Colne Valley (Mr. Riddick).

Taxation

19. **Mr. Flynn:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on tax levels.

Mr. Dorrell: General government tax and royalty receipts are expected to be £166·5 billion in 1993-94.

24. **Mr. David Shaw:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money is expected to be raised from *(a)* income tax, *(b)* corporation tax and *(c)* VAT in the current year.

Mr. Dorrell: The forecast yields from these taxes in 1993-94, set out in table 1.2 of the 1993-94 "Financial Statement and Budget Report", are as follows:

(a) £57·5 billion
(b) £14·6 billion
(c) £39·9 billion

Updated estimates will be presented in the Budget on 30 November.

Consumer Expenditure

20. **Mr. Hain:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the percentage change since 1979 of *(a)* consumer expenditure and *(b)* gross domestic product.

Mr. Nelson: Between 1979 and 1992 real consumer expenditure rose by 370 per cent. and real GDP, at factor cost, rose by 24 per cent.

Manufacturing Industry

22. **Mr. Hutton:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to take fiscal measures to improve the competitiveness and capacity of Britain's manufacturing industries.

Mr. Nelson: The Government's fiscal plans will be set out in the Budget statement on 30 November.

Small Firms

25. **Mr. David Nicholson:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement of the effect of recent fiscal and interest rate measures on the profitability of small firms.

Mr. Nelson: My right hon. Friend the former Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a number of measures in his March Budget of particular assistance to small firms and we now have the lowest interest rates for over 15 years. Small firms are therefore well placed to show renewed growth and to take advantage of sustained economic recovery, based on low inflation, sound public finances and improved competitiveness.

Inflation

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the current annual rate of inflation; what was the rate in *(a)* 1988, *(b)* 1976 and *(c)* 1975; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Nelson: The table gives the information based on the changes in the retail prices index:

	Percentage change over 12 months
September 1993[1]	1·8
1988 annual average	4·9
1976 annual average	16·6
1975 annual average	24·2

[1] The latest month for which data are available.

Beer

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what are the present rates of duty on beer in each of the EC member states; and what monitoring is

carried out by the European Commission of the effect of disparities in duty on the cross-border or cross-channel trade in beer for personal consumption.

Sir John Cope: The present comparative rates of excise duty on beer in each of the EC member states are as follows:

United Kingdom pence per pint at 5 per cent. alcohol by volume

	Pence
Belgium	7·7
Denmark	20·0
Germany	3·8
Greece	[1]2·3
Spain	3·4
France	4·2
Ireland	46·4
Italy	7·9
Luxembourg	[1]2·6
Netherlands	8·7
Portugal	5·9
United Kingdom	29·7

[1] Before implementation of Council directive 92/84/EEC.

No monitoring is currently being carried out by the European Commission of the effect of disparities in duty on the cross-border or cross-channel trade in beer for personal consumption. However, the Commission is obliged every two years to review the rates of duty in force in member states and report to the Council taking into account the proper functioning of the internal market, competition between the different categories of alcoholic drinks, the real value of the rates of duty and the wider objectives of the treaty. The first such review is due not later than 31 December 1994.

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have been prosecuted in each standard region of the United Kingdom for illegally reselling beer imported for domestic consumption since 1 January.

Sir John Cope *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* Customs and Excise has prosecuted four individuals for illegally reselling beer which has not borne United Kingdom duty and VAT. The areas of the country concerned are Hampshire, Kent and Yorkshire. There are 108 other cases involving excise goods generally—alcoholic liquors and tobacco products—for which prosecution proceedings have been instituted but not yet brought to a conclusion.

VAT (Domestic Fuel)

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of imposing VAT on domestic fuel for overall Government expenditure.

Mr. Portillo: The public expenditure cost of extending VAT to domestic fuel will depend on the measures we take to help those on low incomes. Measures will be announced in the Budget.

Businesses, Lewisham

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new businesses have registered for VAT in the London borough of Lewisham since 1992.

Sir John Cope: Separate figures are not held for VAT registrations in individual London boroughs. Lewisham, with several other boroughs, was until early 1993 in the catchment area of Kennington local VAT office (LVO). In early 1993 with three other LVOs it formed the South Bank LVO. The number of new VAT registrations for the two offices since 1992 is as follows:

January 1992—December 1992 Kennington LVO 2,205
January 1993—September 1993 South Bank LVO 8,629

House Prices/Earnings Ratio

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer of 23 April, *Official Report*, column *249*, if he will publish figures for the average house price to earnings ratio for each region for each available quarter of 1993.

Mr. Nelson: Estimates for the first and second quarters of 1993 are given in the table. For the reason explained in the answer given on 27 January 1993, *Official Report*, column *746*, figures for Northern Ireland are available in the second quarter of each year only.

Average house price to earnings ratio:

Region	*Q1 1993*	*Q2 1993*
United Kingdom	—	3·67
Great Britain	3·70	3·69
North	3·04	3·29
Yorkshire and Humberside	3·80	3·41
East Midlands	3·45	3·53
East Anglia	3·69	3·87
South East		
Greater London	3·78	3·72
Rest of South-east	4·31	4·30
South-west	3·79	3·81
West Midlands	3·95	3·64
North-west	3·56	3·41
England	3·78	3·73
Wales	3·58	3·61
Scotland	2·79	3·40
Northern Ireland	—	2·54

Offshore Banking Centres

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the total value of United Kingdom Government debt now held in offshore banking centres.

Mr. Dorrell: The information is not available.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the annual sum in interest paid by his Department to holders of United Kingdom Government debt in offshore banking centres; and if he will list the payments paid to each offshore centre for each year from 1989 to 1992.

Mr. Dorrell: The information is not available.

London and Bishopsgate International Investment Management plc

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what information was sought by his Department from Companies house on the controlling interests of London and Bishopsgate International Management plc when the company applied for a principal's licence under the provisions of the Prevention of Fraud (Investments) Act 1958;

(2) what review he has made of the extent to which his Department undertook all the necessary checks to assure itself that the controlling interests and directors of London and Bishopsgate International Management plc were fit and proper persons in order to be granted a principal's licence.

Mr. Nelson: The usual checks carried out under the Prevention of Fraud (Investments) Act 1958 were made before a licence was issued.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what information London and Bishopsgate International Investment Management plc provided to his Department in respect of its application for a principal's licence on *(a)* the names and addresses of all past and present shareholders who had held at any time individually more than 25 per cent. of the capital of the company, *(b)* the names of the beneficial owners of shares held by nominees and *(c)* where these names were corporations, the controlling interests in those corporations;

(2) what information London and Bishopsgate International Investment Management plc provided in its application for a principal's licence on any person not disclosed elsewhere in the application who had, or intended to have, any measure of control over the company's business;

(3) what reference was made to Mr. Robert Maxwell in London and Bishopsgate International Investment Management plc's application for a principal's licence.

Mr. Nelson: Under the Prevention of Fraud (Investments) Act 1958 a company applying for a principal's licence to carry on the business of dealing in securities was obliged to inform the Department of the names of all directors, controllers and managers of the company. The directors, controllers and managers of London and Bishopsgate International Management plc were notified as Andrew Smith, Kevin Maxwell and Larry Trachtenberg.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what checks his Department made with the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation that London and Bishopsgate International Investment Management plc had applied for membership of the SRO when his Department was considering the company's application for a principal's licence; and what information was exchanged between his Department and IMRO on the company and its controlling interests.

Mr. Nelson: The usual checks carried out under the Prevention of Fraud (Investments) Act 1958 were made before a licence was issued. Exchanges of information amount regulators are confidential.

Privatisation Fees

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list the fees paid to each financial institution used in each privatisation since 1982;

(2) if he will list the fees paid to each firm of accountants used as advisers in each privatisation since 1982;

(3) what amounts of fees were paid to each advertising agency used in each privatisation since 1982;

(4) if he will list the fees paid to each solicitors partnership and company used as advisers to each privatisation since 1982.

Mr. Dorrell: No. Fees paid to specific firms or individuals are treated as commercially confidential. However, privatisation expenses are open to scrutiny by the National Audit Office and, where the Comptroller and Auditor General publishes a report, the sale costs are summarised within.

EC Cohesion Funds

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what amount he expects to be paid to each EC country for each year between 1993 and 1999 arising from cohesion; and how much each non-recipient country would pay in each case based on *(a)* current projections and *(b)* on EC growth rates of (i) ½ per cent., (ii) ½ per cent., (iii) 1 per cent. and (iv) 2 per cent. per annum less than those envisaged at the time of the Edinburgh summit.

Sir John Cope: Following the decisions of the European Council at Edinburgh on 11 and 12 December 1992, EC expenditure commitments in respect of cohesion are planned to be:

million ecu

	Structural funds	*Cohesion funds*
1993 prices		
1993	20,627	1,575
1994 prices		
1994	21,323	1,853
1995	22,747	2,118
1996	24,082	2,383
1997	25,444	2,648
1998	27,206	2,700
1999	29,017	2,753

The European Council also agreed the following indicative allocation of the cohesion fund:

	Per cent.
Spain	52-58
Greece	16-20
Portugal	16-20
Ireland	7-10

All member states are expected to benefit from some cohesion spending. It is not possible to say yet exactly how these commitments will be allocated between member states because detailed programmes for the structural funds are still being discussed.

Member states' contributions to the Community budget are, in general, to the budget as a whole, rather than in respect of specific policies. Member states' contributions to the Community budget depend upon a number of factors, including the size and composition of the Community budget—which may affect the abatement of the United Kingdom's contribution—and relative growth —which may affect the VAT and GNP-based contributions. Member states' shares of total gross contributions in the 1993 adopted budget after taking account of the United Kingdom abatement, were:

	Per cent.
Belgium	4·0
Denmark	2·0
Germany	29·0
Greece	1·0

	Per cent.
Spain	9·0
France	18·0
Ireland	1·0
Italy	16·0
Luxembourg	0·2
Netherlands	6·0
Portugal	2·0
United Kingdom[1]	12·0

[1] The cost of additional spending within the Community would normally be met by the GNP-based resource, at a cost to the United Kingdom of about 5 per cent. after abatement.

While these figures could be used to illustrate the cost of different policies, the effect of different growth patterns on spending on particular policies, and hence member states' contributions in respect of those policies, cannot be predicted. The effect would depend upon decisions which would be taken in the annual budgetary procedure to ensure respect for the own resources ceiling.

Capital Expenditure

Mr. Straw: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish a table showing capital expenditure on *(a)* roads, *(b)* schools, *(c)* railways, *(d)* housing, distinguishing between new build and repair and *(e)* health, for each year since 1978, in cash, in constant prices and on a constant price index where 1978=100.

Mr. Portillo: Figures for public sector asset creation spending on roads, education, British Rail, housing and health and personal social services for the years 1987-88 to 1992-93 are shown in cash terms in table 8.2 of the statistical supplement to the 1992 "Autumn Statement (Cm 2219). Figures prior to 1987-88 are shown at a more aggregated level in table 8.3. The figures can be converted to real terms using the GDP deflator published in table 2.1.

Longer-term series for capital spending on roads and transport, central government spending on health and personal social services, local authority spending on education and housing, and capital spending by British Rail and London Transport, are shown in the article published in Vol. 3, issue 1 of the Treasury bulletin on "Trends in public sector capital spending".

Corporation Tax

Mr. Gill: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of corporation tax receipts derive from unquoted companies.

Mr. Dorrell: I regret that information is not available in precisely the form requested. However, about 8 per cent. of corporation tax is paid by the 300,000 companies charged at the small companies rate; these are likely to include a high proportion of unquoted companies.

Business Cycle

Dr. Berry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the United Kingdom last entered an upswing in the business cycle with a current account deficit of 2 per cent. of gross domestic product.

Mr. Portillo *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* Figures for the current account and gross domestic product are published in "Economic Trends".

Foreign Investors

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what are his Department's estimates for the level of cash repayments by the Inland Revenue to foreign investors on the basis of tax credits on dividends for 1993 and 1994;

(2) how much cash was paid out by the Inland Revenue to foreign investors on the basis of dividend tax credits for each year since 1985;

(3) if he will list by country the cash repayments made by the Inland Revenue to foreign investors on the basis of tax credits on dividends, for each year since 1985.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* Estimates of payments of tax credits to foreign residents under double taxation agreements are given in the table. They exclude, for example, payments to sovereign immune bodies which are not separately identified for repayment of other taxes. The table only identifies countries where payments of tax credits in 1992-93 were greater than £100,000. Forecasts of the levels of payments in future years are not available.

Payments of tax credit to foreign residents under double taxation agreements — *£ thousand*

	1992-93	*1991-92*	*1990-91*	*1989-90*	*1988-89*	*1987-88*	*1986-87*	*1985-86*
Totals	172,469	174,263	146,526	182,098	95,147	105,578	86,278	83,851
of which								
Australia	943	1,032	802	791	473	582	552	560
Belgium	1,331	2,220	345	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Canada	7,785	7,355	11,284	11,748	6,117	7,928	9,435	9,655
Denmark	1,168	1,308	1,394	663	272	1,063	2,094	138
France	2,763	3,596	3,225	1,401	1,167	1,456	985	1,090
Ireland	12,479	10,086	7,232	5,705	4,110	4,873	4,907	4,584
Italy	572	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Japan	11,238	8,114	3,093	2,392	1,517	658	1,324	385
Luxembourg	104	84	138	440	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Malta	160	78	61	74	[1]—	60	98	112
Netherlands	17,819	11,991	8,898	11,155	7,127	6,238	2,530	1,753
New Zealand	666	577	380	316	282	306	331	335
Norway	632	194	98	122	118	257	328	118
Singapore	124	85	445	8	[1]—	164	[1]—	86
Spain	259	88	75	83	72	59	76	59
Sweden	3,027	1,582	975	490	417	172	538	455
Switzerland	4,262	5,239	4,180	3,775	5,801	5,879	8,148	4,528
United States of America	107,289	119,218	102,552	142,430	53,488	75,357	44,075	59,488

[1]Less than £50,000.

Tax Credits

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his Department's estimate of the total volume of tax credits issued by dividend paying companies in each year since 1985.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The following is the information:

Tax credits available on dividends paid by United Kingdom companies

	£ billion
1985	3·8
1986	4·5
1987	4·9
1988	6·2
1989	7·3
1990	7·7
1991	7·9
1992	8·7

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much cash was repaid to domestic investors by the Inland Revenue on the basis of dividend tax credits in each year since 1985.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* Payments of tax credits to United Kingdom residents cannot be separately identified from repayments of income tax. Total income tax repayments and payments of tax credits are given in table 2.10 of "Inland Revenue Statistics" 1993.

DEFENCE

Defence Expenditure

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish for the last two years for which figures are available, the figures for defence spending as a proportion of gross domestic product in each NATO member country.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested is as follows:

Country	*Defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP*	
	1991	*1992*
Belgium	2·3	1·9
Canada	2·0	2·0
Denmark	2·1	1·9
France	3·5	3·4
Germany	2·3	2·2
Greece	5·5	5·5
Italy	2·1	2·0
Luxembourg	1·2	1·2
Netherlands	2·5	2·5
Norway	3·1	3·4
Portugal	3·1	2·9
Spain	1·7	1·7
Turkey	3·8	3·9
United Kingdom	4·3	4·1
United States	5·1	5·2

Belize

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much he expects to be saved by a partial withdrawal from Belize; and how this sum was arrived at.

Mr. Hanley: The decision to withdraw the Belize garrison was taken in the light of the improved security situation in Belize and the improved relations with Guatemala and not for financial reasons. The withdrawal will however, save some £4,038,000 in 1994-95 and some £7,587,000 in each year thereafter. The savings come from a reduction of the "in-country" costs on manpower (overseas allowances for United Kingdom personnel and locally employed civilian costs), travel, fuel and utilities, communications, casualty evacuation, local purchase, hirings and works services.

SA80

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether all difficulties in each theatre with the SA80 have now been resolved; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: With the modifications we have developed, and proper maintenance, we are confident that the SA80 will perform satisfactorily in all theatres where it is deployed. However, all small arms can have difficulties operating in extreme environmental conditions.

Army Act Executions

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many letters and representations the Government have received in support of pardons for soldiers in the great war who were found quilty of charges under the Army Acts who subsequently were executed.

Mr. Hanley: Since 1989 the Ministry of Defence has received some 189 requests from Members of Parliament and members of the public for pardons for the soldiers who were executed during the first world war.

Low Flying

Mr. Trotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many RAF low-flying sorties were carried out in the last year for which figures are available in *(a)* the Netherlands, *(b)* Italy, *(c)* Denmark and *(d)* Belgium; down to what minimum level in each case; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: I have nothing further to add to the answer that I gave the hon. Member on 22 October 1993 at column *369*.

Civilian Staff

Sir Nicholas Bonsor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish a breakdown, by top level budget holder area, agency, where appropriate, and principal category, of United Kingdom-based industrial civilian staff.

Mr. Aitken: The information requested, as at 1 April 1993, is as follows:

MOD United Kingdom-based Industrial civilians by top level budget holder

	Number
(Full-time equivalent)	
MOD total	41,341·0
Navy total	14,137·5
2nd Sea Lord	296·0
Chief of Fleet Support	6,547·0
CinC Naval Home	4,895·5
CinC Fleet	2,316·0
Unallocated	83·0
Army total	15,082·5
CinC UK Land Forces	7,459·5
CinC BAOR	7·0
Adjutant General	273·5
Quartermaster General	5,563·0
Assistant Chief of the General Staff	1,779·5
RAF total	7,248·0
Air Member for Supply and Organisation	13·5
Air Member for Personnel	5·0
AOCinC Strike Command	2,691·0
AOCinC RAF Support Command	4,538·5
Centre total	761·5
Vice Chief of Defence Staff	109·0
2nd PUS	224·0
Chief Scientific Adviser	188·0
Chief of Defence Intelligence	95·5
Meteorological Office	27·5
Vice Chief of Defence Staff (Commitments)	117·5
PE total	4,111·5
Chief of Defence Procurement	1,508·5
Chief Executive Defence Research Agency	2,603·0

MOD United Kingdom-based industrial civilians employed within MOD agencies (full-time equivalents)

	Number
MOD agencies total	9,638·5
Army Base Repair Organisation	2,669·0
Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment	177·0
Defence Animal Centre	21·5
Director General of Defence Accounts	7·0
Defence Operational Analysis Centre	11·0
Duke of York's Royal Military School	20·0
Defence Postal and Courier Service	19·0
Defence Research Agency	2,603·0
Hydrographic Office	35·0
Meteorological Office	27·5
Military Survey	54·0
Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation	1,067·0
Queen Victoria School	13·0
RAF Maintenance Command	2,914·5

Information by principal category is not available without disproportionate cost.

Sir Nicholas Bonsor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish a breakdown by grade, location and occupational group of the United Kingdom-based civilians shown in table 2.3 of Defence Statistics 1993 as employed in *(a)* Army doctrine and training, *(b)* each of the five Army districts, *(c)* naval policy and advice to the Chief of Naval Personnel, *(d)* non-military advice and financial management for the Chief of Fleet Support and *(e)* non-effectives and other staff of the second permanent under-secretary.

Mr. Aitken: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence will write to the hon. Member.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Cann: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the estimated cost of the cosmetic works being done to the Whitehall frontage of his Department's main building and the works being undertaken in the car parking area to the west of the building.

Mr. Hanley: No cosmetic works are being undertaken but a works programme is in progress to improve the security of the south car park of MOD main building, at an estimated cost of £620,000. The movement of the statues and the associated works on Raleigh Green are being managed by the Department of the Environment. The total cost of this work is approximately £164,000, a proportion of which will be met by the MOD.

Anti-personnel Mines

Ms Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures the Government are presently taking to stop the proliferation and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines.

Mr. Aitken: We believe that our current stringent controls on the export of defence equipment, including mines, are sufficient to stop the sales of these weapons to countries which may use them in an irresponsible manner. The United Kingdom fully adheres to the principles of the 1981 United Nations weaponry convention, protocol II, which contains strict rules governing the use of mines.

Ms Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contribution the United Kingdom is making to anti-personnel mine clearance overseas.

Mr. Hanley: British service men are not at present involved in mine-clearance operations, other than those necessary for the passage of aid convoys in the former Yugoslavia. Until UNTAC's mandate ended in August however, a British Army mine clearance training team participated in the United Nations operation in Cambodia.

AWE Sites

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what methods he will use to ensure the monitoring of safety of the older facilities at AWE sites, as described at paragraph 14 of annex B of the Government's memorandum of reply to the Defence Committee's sixth report of Session 1992-93, published in the fifth special report, HC 917.

Mr. Aitken: Methods to ensure the monitoring of safety of all facilities, including older ones, at AWE sites involve the use of inspections, reviews and audits carried out by a number of bodies, including the compliance office and the regulatory authorities concerned with the environmental, health and safety aspects of the sites. These arrangements are in addition to the detailed management, monitoring and audit responsibilities carried out by the contractor (Hunting-BRAE) under the requirements laid down in the term contract.

Nuclear Submarines

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the occasions since 1979 when a submarine commander has failed to notify the requisite

authorities within the mandatory time of an accident involving a United Kingdom nuclear submarine; and what action has been taken on such occasions.

Mr. Hanley: Since 1979 there has only been one such incident. The commanding officer of the submarine concerned was the subject of a recent court martial.

Chemical Weapons (Vaccines)

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on medical prophylactic measures taken to protect British service men who served in Operation Granby in Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia against chemical weapons attack; and what assessment has been made of the deleterious health effects arising from these protection measures.

Mr. Hanley: The only medical prophylactic agent employed against chemical weapon attack was the drug pyridostigmine bromide. It was issued in tablet packs called nerve agent pre-treatment sets (NAPS). One tablet containing 30 mg of the drug was taken every eight hours while the threat of chemical attack remained. NAPS has undergone trials at CBDE Porton Down and the drug pyridostigmine bromide has been used for many years in the treatment of the nerve disorder myasthenia gravis. Apart from the temporary minor side effects, the trials revealed that NAPS produced no deleterious health effects. Occasional minor side effects were reported during Operation Granby but these ceased as soon as NAPS was stopped.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements exist for keeping records of protective vaccines administered to British service men; and whether such records are available for inspection by *(a)* serving members of the armed forces, *(b)* former members of the armed forces and *(c)* general practitioners or hospital doctors treating former members of the armed forces.

Mr. Hanley: Standard procedures involve records of vaccines administered being kept in an individual's service medical documents. In operational situations these procedures may need to be modified to meet the circumstances existing at the time. During Operation Granby, for logistic reasons, individual service medical documents were not held locally. Any vaccines given were entered on a nominal roll for later transfer to individual records. Given the rapid repatriation and demobilisation of personnel at the end of the conflict it is possible that some individual records were not annotated with vaccination details. I have placed a copy of an internal Ministry of Defence report on the vaccines used for Operation Granby in the Library of the House.

Individual medical documents have the privacy marking "Medical in Confidence". Access to them is therefore restricted to members of the medical professions or to the patient concerned in accordance with the provisions of the Access to Health Records Act 1990. When a Service person leaves the Armed Forces, their Service medical documents remain the property of the MOD. Civilian GPs or hospital specialists will be provided, upon request and with the patient's consent, with any further information, or copies of records, they require to assist in the management of individual patients.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what stocks of nerve agent pre-treatment vaccines are held by his Department.

Mr. Hanley: Nerve agent pre-treatment vaccines are not held by the MOD. Protection for Her Majesty's forces against nerve agent poisoning is achieved by the use of NAPS. Sufficient stocks are held to meet the operational requirements of all three services. It is not the Department's practice to disclose stock levels.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received from the British Society for Allergy and Environmental Medicine in regard to service men or former service men who are suffering deleterious health effects having served in Operation Granby in the Gulf war.

Mr. Hanley: We have received no representations from the British Society for Allergy and Environmental Medicine. One member of the society has, however, written to the Department in his capacity as a medical practitioner in relation to one of his patients. For reasons of medical confidentiality, I am unable to give further details.

Depleted Uranium

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 27 October, *Official Report*, column *705*, what representations he has received from the general public regarding concerns over the storage of depleted uranium at his Department's establishments.

Mr. Aitken: My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence has received no such representations. Officials have received a small number of inquiries on this subject from the general public.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the storage sites which have been authorised for storage or handling of his Department's raw stocks of depleted uranium prior to manufacture into ammunition.

Mr. Aitken: Depleted uranium (DU) for the production of DU projectiles is procured direct by the manufacturers and handling and storage are a matter for them. The Defence Research Agency holds some stocks of raw DU at Fort Halstead for research purposes.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the last assessment of the level of risk facing British forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina from *(a)* Croat, *(b)* Muslim and *(c)* Serb forces; how often such levels of risk are assessed; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: British forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina face considerable risks in carrying out their task of escorting humanitarian aid. The principal threat is posed by fighting between Bosnian factions in the vicinity of British bases, rather than by deliberate targeting. We keep the level of danger under continuous review; assessments are made daily both in the United Kingdom and in theatre.

Overseas Forces

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many armed forces personnel are currently stationed overseas; what is the total expenditure incurred; and if he will provide a breakdown of this information by individual country and location.

Mr. Hanley: I will write to the hon. Member.

EC Defence Spending

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish a table showing the level of defence spending in each of the European Community member states as a percentage of gross domestic product.

Mr. Hanley: Defence expenditure in 1992 for all EC countries other than the Republic of Ireland is set out in the 1993 Statement on the Defence Estimates (Cm 2270). The Republic of Ireland is expected to devote around 1·2 per cent. of its GDP to defence in 1992-93.

Flying Training

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what procedure he intends to adopt in making decisions following the review of RAF flying training.

Mr. Hanley: I will consider carefully the proposals and recommendations emanating from the review. These proposals will then be the subject of consultation with the MOD trades unions and other interested parties before any final decisions on the future organisation of RAF flying training are taken.

Mr. David Hart

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times and on what dates Mr. David Hart has visited his Department or any other MOD installation in the last six months.

Mr. Hanley: The number of occasions Mr. Hart has visited the MOD over the last six months has not been centrally recorded. Mr. Hart visited RAF Strike Command at High Wycombe on 27 May 1993.

Terrain Mobile Platforms

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 28 October, *Official Report*, column 728, if he will set out the arrangements under which the all terrain mobile platforms are available for the use of 5 Airborne Brigade; which unit has peacetime control of these vehicles; what plans he has to authorise a formal establishment of such vehicles for 5 Airborne Brigade; what similar vehicles are available to 24 Airmobile Brigade; what plans he has to provide a formal establishment of such vehicles for 24 Airmobile Brigade; whether it will be possible for both brigades to be operationally deployed simultaneously; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: 5 Airborne Brigade has first priority use of 39 all terrain mobile platforms from a central operational pool of equipment. They are currently held and maintained by 5 Airborne Brigade, although the holding is not established and there are no current plans to establish it. Routine replacement of these vehicles is planned. We are considering the future requirement for additional all terrain mobile platforms, including for 24 Airmobile Brigade. Both brigades could be operationally deployed simultaneously now if necessary.

Pregnant Women

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what effect the sums required to be paid in compensation to pregnant women will have on the size of the defence budget in each year from 1992-93 to 1995-96.

Mr. Hanley: At the present time, it is not possible to estimate the total cost of the compensation.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 5 November 1993

PRIME MINISTER

UNESCO

Dr. Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has received in the past three months regarding United Kingdom membership of UNESCO; and if he will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: Since the beginning of August, I have received representations from a member of the House of Lords, four Members of Parliament, the Honourable Hector Wynter of the Caribbean Democratic Union, plus a petition with 99 signatures from the Deal branch of the United Nations Association. All have called for the United Kingdom to resume membership of UNESCO.

European Council

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to his oral statement on the special meeting of the European Council, *Official Report,* 1 November, *Official Report,* column 20, whether the new transparency measures for operation of the Council will include agreement to make public petitions submitted by European citizens to the Council.

The Prime Minister: There are no formal procedures for petitioning the Council. Letters addressed to the Council by members of the public are passed to the presidency by the Council Secretariat for appropriate action. Article 138d of the Maastricht treaty establishes a right of petition to the European Parliament. It is for the Parliament to decide whether such petitions should be made public.

Cyprus

Mr. Cox: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he is to have with the Turkish Government on the question of illegal settlers entering northern Cyprus from mainland Turkey following the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government communiqué on this issue; and if he will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting communiqué covered a number of aspects of the Cyprus dispute, including the question of settlers from Turkey, and called for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions.

We take every suitable opportunity to reiterate to the Turkish Government the need for all parties involved to adopt a constructive attitude.

Professor R. V. Jones

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has had from General Doyle Larson of the Central Intelligence Agency in relation to Professor R. V. Jones.

The Prime Minister: I have received no such representations regarding Professor R. V. Jones, though I welcome the decision by the Central Intelligence Agency to recognise his outstanding achievement in the field of scientific intelligence.

Joint Intelligence Committee

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the dates on which the Joint Intelligence Committee met *(a)* between 31 May 1989 and 1 August 1990 and *(b)* between 1 November 1991 and 1 April 1992.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the booklet on the "Central Intelligence Machinery" published by HMSO on 1 October, which states that the Joint Intelligence Committee is responsible for producing a weekly survey on intelligence. The committee meets each week for this purpose. It did so throughout the periods cited except for two weeks during each of the Christmas-new year breaks at the end of 1990 and 1991. I do not propose to list all these meetings individually.

Mr. Mohammed Hashemi

Mr. Byers: To asks the Prime Minister on how many occasions since December 1990 Mr. Mohammed Hashemi has attended functions or meetings at 10 Downing street.

The Prime Minister: As far as I am aware, Mr. Mohammed Hashemi has not attended any functions or meetings at 10 Downing street since December 1990.

Conservative Party Conference

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Sheffield, Attercliffe, (Mr. Betts) of 18 November, *Official Report,* column *57,* what factual briefing was provided by civil servants for his speech to the Conservative and Unionist party conference in Blackpool.

The Prime Minister: In preparing for this speech, I drew on factual information already available in my office, and on other sources.

House of Lords

Mr. Allen: To ask the Prime Minister if he will now bring forward proposals to reform the Second Chamber.

The Prime Minister: No.

Official Secrets Act

Mr. Allason: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to his answer of 2 November, *Official Report,* columns *90-91,* what permission is required under section 1(1) of the Official Secrets Act 1989 for former officials to publish memoirs; on what dates that permission was applied for by *(a)* Mr. Desmond Bristow and *(b)* Mr. Brian Crozier; and what rights have been reserved by the Crown with regard to legal action in each case.

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs will shortly be writing in response to the hon. Member's letter of 26 October to the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs about Mr. Bristow and Mr. Crozier. That reply will take into account the points now raised.

Telephone Sex Lines

Dr. Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what action he is taking to discipline those who use Whitehall telephones to make 0898 sex line calls at public expense; and what action has been taken to stop these calls.

The Prime Minister: Unauthorised use of official telephones is a disciplinary matter which is dealt with under normal departmental disciplinary arrangements. These disciplinary arrangements are set out in the "Civil Service Management Code—Rules of Code and Practice."

Central guidance recommends that Departments take action to bar outgoing calls to certain destinations, including recorded information line numbers. Call barring and call logging have already been implemented on many Government exchanges. Central guidance on these matters will be strongly reinforced in the light of the recent National Audit Office report on the management of telephone services.

Prime Minister's Office

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister how many staff were employed in his Prime Ministerial offices, and in what categories of work, in 1989-90 and at the latest available date.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* The information is as follows:

	1989	*1993*
Private Secretaries, Appointments and Honours	19	21
Policy Unit	10	13
Press Office	8	10
Filing, Records, Correspondence and support staff not included in the above	31	37
Messengerial support grades	N/a	[1]26
TOTAL	68	[1]107

N/a Not available.

[1] As a result of delegated budgetary arrangements, 26 support grade staff who were on the Cabinet Office central budget in 1989 have been transferred to the No. 10 budget and manpower count.

Press Office

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister how many people were employed in the No. 10 press office in 1979, 1989 and the latest available date.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* Including secretarial/typing support, the figures are:

	Numbers
1979	8
1989	8
1993	10

Government Car Service

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Prime Minister what changes took place in the allocation of charges to his office by the Government car service in 1984-85; and what is the latest annual cost.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* In 1984-85 arrangements were introduced for charging my office direct, in common with all other users, for the use of the Government car service. Previous to this, the cost of this service was met from central funds. The charge to my office for the use of the Government car service in 1992-93 was £469,747.

ENVIRONMENT

Correspondence

Mr. Thurnham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will reply to the letter dated 17 August from Mr. D. Whittaker of 30 Wilkinson road, Astley Bridge, Bolton, concerning the drainage of water from Sweetloves reservoir, Bolton; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: I regret to say that Mr. Whittaker's letter was not received. We have, however, obtained a copy of the letter from Bolton borough council to which he had also written. A reply was sent to him on 4 November 1993.

Housing Management

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will announce the timetable for implementation of compulsory competitive tendering in local authority housing management; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: I expect to make an announcement shortly.

Housing (Investment)

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been *(a)* the gross and *(b)* the net public investment in (i) local authority housing, (ii) housing associations and (iii) private sector housing in real terms in each year since 1979.

Sir George Young: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been *(a)* the gross and *(b)* the net public investment in housing as a proportion of gross domestic product for each year since 1979.

Sir George Young: The requested figures are not available. Reliable outturn information on public investment in housing is available only on a financial year basis, whereas estimates of gross domestic product in England are available only for calendar years.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been *(a)* the gross public and *(b)* the net investment in housing in real terms at 1993 prices in each year since 1979.

Sir George Young: The available information is as follows:

Public investment in housing[1], England, 1979-80 to 1992-93 (£ million)

	Gross capital expenditure		*Net expenditure*	
	Cash	*1993-94 prices[2]*	*Cash*	*1993-94 prices[2]*
1979-80	3,508	8,623	2,681	6,591
1980-81	3,403	7,069	2,330	4,840
1981-82	3,271	6,196	1,517	2,874
1982-83	4,065	7,189	1,436	2,539
1983-84	4,405	7,445	2,054	3,472
1984-85	4,286	6,894	2,169	3,489
1985-86	3,794	5,786	1,790	2,730
1986-87	3,775	5,578	1,513	2,236
1987-88	4,077	5,710	1,444	2,022
1988-89	4,444	5,802	654	854
1989-90	6,103	7,477	2,449	3,001
New capital finance system				
1990-91	4,261	4,833	1,678	1,903
1991-92	4,466	4,749	2,653	2,821
1992-93[3]	5,079	5,218	3,596	3,695

[1] Capital housing expenditure by local authorities, New Towns, the Housing Corporation and other DoE-funded schemes.
[2] Cash figures converted to 1993-94 price levels by excluding the effect of general inflation as measured by the GDP market prices deflator.
[3] Provisional.

In addition, since 1989 some £2 billion of private finance has been levered in to support the Housing Corporation's programme.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing the amount and source of public investment in housing in England, for each financial year since 1978, in cash, constant prices and on an index where 1978 equals 100.

Mr. Gummer *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what his timetable is for responding to the 1994-95 housing investment programme bids by local authorities; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: I expect to announce local authorities' 1994-95 housing investment programme allocations in December.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what will the deadlines be in 1994 for submission by local authorities of *(a)* housing investment programme bids and *(b)* housing strategy documents.

Sir George Young: Decisions on these matters will be taken after the current housing investment programme round is complete.

Rents

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the impact of the decrease of grants on the average level of housing association rents.

Sir George Young: Evidence on a range of issues, including the likely impact on the affordability of rents and on the availability of private finance, was fully considered before a decision was taken on the average grant rate for 1994-95.

The Housing Corporation's assessment of the grant rate model for 1994-95 showed that, because of reductions in procurement and borrowing costs, the affordability of modelled rents could be held constant at a lower average grant rate than the current 67 per cent. Furthermore, because of the scope for rent pooling and efficiency savings, evidence suggested that actual rents would be lower than those suggested by the model.

It is, however, for housing associations to set their own rents at levels which are affordable to those on low incomes, as required by the tenants guarantee. The excellent response to the 1994-95 bidding round suggests that associations are confident of their ability to undertake schemes at affordable rents within the grant rates available.

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the operation of rent assessment committees in assessing the market rent for housing association property.

Sir George Young: Under section 13 of the Housing Act 1988, assured tenants of registered housing associations have the right in certain circumstances, to refer their rent to a rent assessment committee for the determination of a market rent.

Rent assessment committees carry out this function under section 14 of the Act which requires them to consider what level of rent the landlord could reasonably expect for the property, if it were let on the open market under an assured tenancy.

Ms Estelle Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what advice or representations he has received concerning the capacity of housing associations to pool rents; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: The Housing Corporation has advised that, across the whole programme, housing associations continue to have further capacity to pool rents; the position for individual associations may, of course, vary.

Right to Manage Scheme

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many consultation meetings he has held to date with local authorities on his Department's right to manage scheme; and how many he plans to hold.

Sir George Young: Since it was first announced in June 1992, preparations for the new right to manage have been

informed throughout by the views of local authorities and tenants' organisations. Views obtained by means of consultation papers have been augmented by discussions between officials and local authorities at seminars on the right to manage funded by the Department and organised by tenant training agencies. Officials have separately met a range of interested groups, including local authority officers, to discuss the Department's preparations for the right to manage in greater detail. In addition, local authorities and their associations are involved in a series of advisory groups set up to inform the preparation of detailed guidance. A meeting with local authority associations is planned for 11 November, and further meetings with authorities and the associations will be held as necessary.

Local Government Review

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the suggested opting-in procedure under the local government review.

Mr. Baldry: In considering the best way forward for the Local Government Commission's reviews, we looked carefully at all the options that were before us, including procedures for opting-in. We concluded, however, that all shire areas should have the opportunity to secure the benefits which we believe unitary authorities can offer.

My right hon. Friend therefore announced on 30 September that all the shire counties in England would be reviewed by the commission by about the end of 1994.

Urban Regeneration Agency

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the intended establishment of the urban renewal agency; where are the intended regional sites where it will be based; and where the administrative core will be based.

Mr. Baldry: The urban regeneration agency will be launched later this month. At that point it will take over from my Department responsibility for the city grant programme and will have a staff complement of 20. From April 1994, it will incorporate the derelict land grant programme, also now run by my Department, and the programmes of English Estates. It will be for the agency to assess the staff resources it will need to deliver these programmes. The agency will have a strong regional structure and a headquarters outside London. The locations of the regional offices and the headquarters have yet to be decided.

Council Housing Stock

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 1 November to the hon. Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Thurnham), *Official Report*, column *3*, about the transfer of council housing stock to registered housing associations, how much was spent *(a)* by each authority listed in preparing the transfer and *(b)* by local authorities where tenants have voted against transfer.

Sir George Young: Set up costs for the housing associations involved in the 23 transfers that have taken place so far have been met by grants from the local authorities as follows:

	£ million
Breckland DC	2·50
Broadland DC	1·80
London Borough of Bromley	5·80
Chiltern DC	1·11
Christchurch DC	1·14
East Cambridgeshire DC	2·20
East Dorset DC	1·20
Hambleton DC	1·80
Medina DC	1·40
Mid Sussex DC	2·30
Newbury DC	1·40
North Bedfordshire DC	3·05
Rochester upon Medway DC	4·50
Ryedale DC	1·57
Sevenoaks DC	1·75
South Buckinghamshire DC	1·46
South Wight DC	1·20
Suffolk Coastal DC	2·05
Surrey Heath DC	1·70
Swale DC	1·57
Tonbridge and Malling DC	2·24
Tunbridge Wells DC	2·80
West Dorset DC	1·80

These grants cover reasonable staff costs, consultancy fees for the legal, financial and other work involved and costs relating to tenant consultation. They do not cover costs which should be incurred by the purchaser post-transfer such as the provision of long-term office accommodation.

We have no comparable information on local authorities' own costs.

Estate Action

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) when the next allocation of estate action scheme resources will be available; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what resources have been made available in each region on an annual basis since the introduction of the estate action scheme.

Sir George Young: I will write to the hon. Member.

New Age Travellers

Mr. Aspinwall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if, following the High Court decision that travellers did not come within the legal definition of gipsy, in the case of new age travellers seeking to compel Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Devon county councils to provide them with camp sites, he will now withdraw directions to Avon county council to provide sites for gipsies; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: The question of gipsy status under the Caravan Sites Act 1968 is a matter of fact and degree to be determined by local authorities whom the Act requires to provide accommodation for gipsies. I have no doubt that authorities will study closely the recent judgment of the High Court about the status of travellers stationed on unauthorised sites in Devon, Gloucestershire and Warwickshire.

A count undertaken on 21 July 1993 found 332 gipsy caravans stationed on unauthorised sites in the county of Avon. My right hon. Friend has no plans to withdraw the direction to provide sites which his predecessor gave to Avon county council on 13 October 1990.

Teenage Mothers

Ms Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many lone teenage mothers have been housed in the last 12 months by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations.

Sir George Young: I will write to the hon. Member.

Capital Receipts

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the latest estimate of capital receipts which local authorities will spend as a result of the temporary relaxation in the November statement of 1992; and what was the forecast made at the time.

Mr. Baldry: Recent information provided by most local authorities in England indicates that authorities expect to obtain around £2·3 billion of usable capital receipts during the period of relaxation—13 November 1992 to 31 December 1993—of which about £1·3 billion represents extra spending power arising from the relaxation. It is for the local authorities to decide the spending of their usable capital receipts. At the time of the autumn statement last November, the extra spending powers arising from the relaxation was estimated at around £1·75 billion, based on an extrapolation of authorities' own forecasts of their capital receipts in 1992-93.

Council House Sales

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 26 April, 1993 *Official Report*, column *326*, if he will update the table on council house sales and values for the latest available quarters.

Sir George Young: The latest available information, which is for the period January to March 1993, is given in the table. The table also provides updates of the figures given in the reply of 26 April for the preceding three quarters.

Number of council house sales and value by region (£000)

	April to June 1992[1]			*July to September 1992*[1]			*October to December 1992*[1]			*January to March 1993*[1]		
	Number of sales	*Undiscounted value of sales*	*Value (1981 prices)*	*Number of sales*	*Undiscounted value of sales*	*Value (1981 prices)*	*Number of sales*	*Undiscounted value of sales*	*Value (1981 prices)*	*Number of sales*	*Undiscounted value of sales*	*Value 1981 (prices)*
DOE Regions												
North (excluding Cumbria)	1,057	30,258	16,255	1,235	33,573	17,666	1,075	28,453	15,037	846	25,367	13,246
Yorkshire and Humberside	976	32,719	17,577	1,079	36,832	19,600	780	26,423	13,964	801	26,128	13,644
East Midlands	686	24,428	13,123	845	29,208	15,543	770	28,046	14,822	572	20,228	10,563
Eastern	1,198	57,597	30,943	1,564	76,773	40,855	1,235	54,762	28,941	1,134	50,688	26,468
London Boroughs	2,194	128,681	69,131	2,611	160,995	85,674	1,835	103,619	54,761	1,536	86,683	45,264
South East	1,043	52,798	26,364	1,418	72,157	38,399	1,018	52,299	27,639	1,186	44,968	23,481
South West	713	30,332	16,295	941	40,266	21,428	784	33,881	17,906	736	30,016	15,674
West Midlands	1,064	40,134	21,561	1,104	41,452	22,059	958	36,216	19,140	971	32,929	17,195
North West (including Cumbria)	1,273	40,066	21,524	1,312	38,791	20,643	1,073	35,677	18,855	1,148	33,749	17,623
England	10,204	437,013	234,775	12,109	530,047	282,066	9,528	399,376	211,066	8,930	350,756	183,158

[1]Provisional.

Public Toilets

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many functioning public toilets each local authority operates at the present time *(a)* in total and *(b)* per 1,000 of the population.

Mr. Baldry: This information is not available.

Gipsies

Mr. Aspinwall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many gipsies are currently resident in the county of Avon.

Mr. Baldry: My Department carries out a biannual count of gipsy caravans on the basis of information provided by district and borough councils. The latest count, on 21 July 1993, found 406 caravans with gipsies residing in or resorting to the county of Avon on that day.

Public Expenditure, London

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been the public expenditure provision for each London borough for *(a)* estate action, *(b)* urban programme, *(c)* city challenge, *(d)* direct land grant, *(e)* city action teams, *(f)* the development corporation, *(g)* inner city task forces and *(h)* housing action trusts for each year since 1979 for which figures are available; and how much city grant has been spent in each of the London boroughs in each year since 1979 for which figures are available.

Mr. Curry: I will write to the hon. Member.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Roger Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what recent representations he has received regarding the visual effect on the countryside of the erection of 15 m masts as a result of amendment 6 of the General Development Order;

(2) how many telecommunications masts have been erected without planning permission as a result of amendment 6 of the General Development Order.

Mr. Baldry: I will write to my hon. Friend.

Mr. Rathbone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) how many telecommunication masts of *(a)* up to 15 m in height and *(b)* over 15 m in height have been erected in (i) areas of outstanding natural beauty, (ii) environmentally sensitive areas and *(c)* other areas in England;

(2) how many permissions have been granted on appeal to him for erection of telecommunication masts of over

15 m in height in England in areas of outstanding natural beauty, in environmentally sensitive areas and in other areas in England;

(3) how many local district authorities have included in their approved development plans specific policies for the siting of telecommunication masts in their area; how many have not; and how many are awaiting approval of such plans;

(4) what encouragement the Government are giving for the erection of telecommunication masts under 15 m in height rather than those of greater height;

(5) what steps the Government are taking to encourage mast sharing among telecommunications operators, particular in respect of masts over 15 m in height; and what assessment has been made of the results of such encouragement.

Mr. Baldry: I will write to my hon. Friend.

Hydrochlorofluorocarbons

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) when he expects the European Environment Council to agree to implementation of the Commission's proposed directive on early phase-out of HCFCs;

(2) what is the United Kingdom's position regarding the European Commission's proposed directive on early phase-out of HCFCs; and what representation he has received from the refrigeration industry regarding the cost implications of this directive.

Mr. Yeo: I will write to the hon. Member.

National Rivers Authority

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what are his plans for market testing or privatisation of the laboratory service of the National Rivers Authority;

(2) what plans he has for the closure of laboratories used by the National Rivers Authority; and what critera are to be used to select laboratories for closure;

(3) if he will list the areas served by each chemical laboratory used by the National Rivers Authority;

(4) what representations his Department has received regarding the timetable of the market-testing exercise for National Rivers Authority laboratories and their reliability of financial information on which their exercise is based;

(5) what internal audit there has been in respect of the liability of financial information relating to the market testing of National Rivers Authority laboratory services; and what were the results of that internal audit;

(6) what assessment he has made of the implications of closing or sharing National Rivers Authority laboratories for the investigation and prosecution of pollution incidents; and what representations he has received from external legal advisers on the subject.

Mr. Yeo: I will write to the hon. Member.

Housing Associations

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing whether the public have a statutory right to *(a)* attend all board or committee meetings, *(b)* inspect the minutes of meetings, *(c)* inspect the annual reports, *(d)* inspect the annual accounts and *(e)* inspect a register of members' interests of housing associations.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 2 November 1993]:* The Housing Corporation has the statutory responsibility to fund and supervise registered housing associations. As part of its supervisory role, the corporation receives the associations' annual accounts and requires associations to provide a wide range of information on a regular basis covering the performance and management of associations, including the disclosure of committee members' interests. These returns are available to members of the public and may be viewed at the corporation's headquarters.

Docklands Light Railway

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the names of the chair and other non-executive directors of the Docklands Light Railway, with their remuneration and entitlement to pension and other expenses and allowances; and what other public appointments and other directorships each of them holds.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The chairman of the Docklands Light Railway is Sir Peter Levene; his remuneration is £27,000. Now that he has become chairman and chief executive of Canary Wharf, Sir Peter will step down from the chairmanship of the railway when a successor is in place. Sir Peter retains his post as adviser to the Prime Minister on efficiency and effectiveness. The non-executive directors are Bryan Martin, Robert Rankin, Sir Robert Reid and Eric Sorensen. Three directors draw no salaries, one is paid in the range of £10,000 to £15,000. Non-executive directors have no pension entitlement. Reasonable costs incurred by directors when they are working on the company's behalf are reimbursed. A register of the directors interest is kept by the Docklands Light Railway and can be consulted at the company's headquarters in Castor lane, Poplar, London E14.

Energy Conservation

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will give a breakdown of the budget allocated for energy conservation.

Mr. Yeo: The budget for the Energy Efficiency Office for 1993-94 is £69·1 million. This is allocated as follows:

Programme	*£million/ annum*
Best Practice programme	15·3
Low Income Households (including Home Energy Efficiency Scheme)	41·5
Energy Management Efficiency Scheme	1·7
Information and Publicity (including Helping the Earth Begins at Home)	8·8
Local Energy Advice Centres	1·8

The local energy advice centres are being administered by the Energy Saving Trust, implementing a partnership between the Government and electricity and gas industries. The trust is also developing other energy efficiency programmes, not financed by Government.

The Government have also made available £3 million of supplementary credit approvals for local authorities to invest in energy efficiency on a capital partnership basis.

Several other Government initiatives also promote energy efficiency. These include the energy-related environmental issues programme which has a budget of £1·1 million in 1993-94.

The green house demonstration programme awards supplementary credit approvals for replicable demonstration projects on energy efficiency measures in council housing. A further £5 million is being allocated to 27 more schemes in 1993-94, bringing the overall total to £60 million.

Local authorities already spend a large proportion of the improvement budgets on energy related work. Housing renovation grants are often used to implement energy efficiency measures, but energy efficiency may be only one element of the work and is, therefore, less quantifiable.

"Development Below the Low Water Mark"

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he published the departmental paper, "Development Below the Low Water Mark", reviewing regulation in England and Wales; how many copies have been printed; at what cost; and to whom it has been distributed.

Mr. Yeo: The consultation paper, "Development Below the Low Water Mark", was published on 18 October 1993. A total of 735 copies were printed at a cost of £1,258. The paper has been distributed to port authorities, sea fisheries committees, marine and conservation societies, libraries, university departments, local planning authorities, the Sports Council and members of the public, as well as other bodies with an interest.

Old Mine Workings

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will commission an environmental impact study into the consequences of the ceasing of pumping operations from old mine workings in County Durham.

Mr. Yeo: No. The National Rivers Authority has already carried out an assessment of the problem with the assistance of consultants. The consequences of cessations of pumping are a matter for British Coal to consider in consultation with the National Rivers Authority and other regulatory authorities.

Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (i) if he will list the statutory consultees who (i) submitted objections to THORP during the second consultation period and (ii) called for a full public inquiry into the operation of THORP;

(2) if he will list those local authorities and non-governmental organisations who (i) submitted objections to THORP during the second consultation period and (ii) called for a full public inquiry into the operation of THORP.

Mr. Yeo: Responses to the consultation are still being assessed. Detailed information about the responses will be made available once they have all been considered.

Sustainable Development and Planning

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to meet non-government organisations to discuss sustainable development and planning.

Mr. Yeo: There is constant dialogue about sustainable development between non-governmental organisations and my Department at all levels, and planning issues are very often raised in those discussions.

Sellafield

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment has been carried out by his Department concerning the detriment to the health of the United Kingdom, Europe and the world resulting from each year of discharge from BNFL's Sellafield installation.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 22 October 1993]:* Information was provided by my right hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the chief inspector of Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution during the public consultation on the proposed review of the Sellafield authorisation. In addition, the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment requested the National Radiological Protection Board to assess the doses to the populations of the United Kingdom, Europe and the world arising from one year's proposed discharges from BNFL Sellafield including THORP and non-THORP releases. A copy of this report is in the Library.

EDUCATION

School Inspections

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps he intends to take to monitor the procedures used for tendering for school inspection work.

Mr. Robin Squire: The arrangements for inspecting schools under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 are a matter for OFSTED. I have asked Professor Sutherland to write to the hon. Member.

Grant-maintained Schools

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will provide a breakdown of the activities to be funded at the Grant-maintained Schools Centre Ltd. in 1993-94.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend is making grant available to the Grant Maintained Schools Centre in 1993-94 to support the following activities:

1. dissemination of factual information about self-governing status to schools considering or in the process of applying for such status, including through the establishment and operation of regional advice centres;
2. the provision of a secretariat and support services for the Grant Maintained Schools' Standing Advisory Committee; and
3. provision of information and advice to grant-maintained schools through the GMSC's Schools Subscription Scheme.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 24 May 1993, *Official Report*, columns *388-404*, if he will update the information on direct and central maintenance grants to grant-maintained schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested has been placed in the Library. The cash figures and percentages given may in some cases have changed since the reply that my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools, the hon. Member for Mid Worcestershire (Mr. Forth), gave on 24 May 1993, *Official Report*, columns *388-404*, as grants may be redetermined where, for example, schools qualify under their former maintaining LEA's local management of schools scheme for contingency payments.

Special Schools

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) how many hospital schools have been proposed for closure since April 1991; and what was the decision of his Department when the closure proposals were referred to him;

(2) if he will list by local education authority area the hospital schools accepting children *(a)* in 1988 and *(b)* at the latest year for which figures are available, giving the number of places available in each school, the number filled and the specific special educational role of each school;

(3) how many children in each local education authority in *(a)* the primary and *(b)* the secondary level have not been placed in schools or other establishments designated to meet special educational needs in each of the last five years; and what were the alternative educational arrangements made in each case;

(4) how many special schools catering for children with emotional and behavioural problems have been proposed for closure since April 1991; and what was the decision of his Department when the closure proposals were referred to him;

(5) if he will list by local education authority area the special schools accepting children with emotional and behavioural problems *(a)* in 1988 and *(b)* at the latest year for which figures are available, giving the number of places available in each school and the number of places filled;

(6) if he will publish the amount spent by each local education authority on meeting the special educational needs of children together with the percentage of the authority's budget represented by this sum.

Mr. Forth: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many visits for inspection or advice have been made by HMI/OFSTED in each of the last five years to special schools principally serving children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Mr. Forth: I will write to the hon. Member with the information he requests up until 31 August 1992. Arrangements for inspecting schools became a matter for OFSTED from 1 September 1992 and I am, therefore, asking Professor Sutherland to write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many visits for inspection or advice have been made by HMI/OFSTED in each of the last five years to hospital schools.

Mr. Forth: I will write to the hon. Member with the information he requests up until 31 August 1992. Arrangements for inspecting schools became a matter for OFSTED from 1 September 1992 and I am, therefore, asking Professor Sutherland to write to the hon. Member.

City Technology Colleges

Mr. Grocott: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what is the total cost to date *(a)* to public funds and *(b)* to private funds of the city technology college programme;

(2) if he will list the city technology colleges currently in operation indicating in each case, the amount of capital expenditure which came from *(a)* public and *(b)* private funds;

(3) if he will list the amount of money promised from private companies towards the city technology college programme and the amount of money actually received.

Mr. Robin Squire: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools, the hon. Member for Mid Worcestershire (Mr. Forth), gave to the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) on 29 June 1993, *Official Report*, columns *463-68*.

Asbestos

Ms Estelle Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make extra finance available to local education authorities so that asbestos can be removed from school buildings.

Mr. Forth: It is for local education authorities to determine their own priorities within the substantial recurrent and capital funds at their disposal.

Student Loans

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will discuss with the Student Loan Company and the Committee of Vice Chancellors, means of improving the application procedure and facilities, and the subsequent processing of students' applications for loans.

Mr. Boswell: I have periodic discussions with the Student Loans Company. The company also has periodic liaison meetings with representatives of the higher education institutions. The company is planning to introduce an improved application procedure for existing borrowers in the academic year 1994-95. The company aims to pay loans within 21 days of receipt of a completed application form.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will publish a table showing for each of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department, whether the public has a statutory right to attend all board or committee meetings, and to inspect *(a)* the minutes of meetings, *(b)* the annual reports and *(c)* the annual accounts.

Mr. Boswell: I will write to the hon. Member.

Teacher Vacancies

Mr. Jacques Arnold: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will publish final figures for teacher vacancies at January 1993.

Mr. Robin Squire: Final details of teacher vacancies in England at January 1993 have been placed in the Library.

The overall total is unchanged from the provisional total for 1993 which my right hon. Friend provided in reply to a question from the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight (Mr. Field) on 14 May 1993, *Official Report*, column *578*.

Sex Education

Mr. Thurnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) whether *(a)* abortion and *(b)* contraception will be considered as biological or other aspects of human sexual behaviour in his Department's forthcoming guidance to schools on sex education;

(2) what definition will be given within his Department's forthcoming guidance to schools on sex education to help teachers distinguish between biological and other aspects of human sexual behaviour.

Mr. Forth: I will write to my hon. Friend.

Student Grants

Mr. Campbell-Savours: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what discussions he has had with the university vice-chancellors on the level of student grants.

Mr. Boswell: My right hon. Friend and I last met the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals on Monday 25 October. We had a useful and interesting exchange of views on a number of current issues in higher education.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Peterlee Police

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Attorney-General how many cases have been received by the Crown Prosecution Service from the Peterlee sub-divisional police in each year since 1990; and how many have resulted in prosecution.

The Attorney-General: Figures for Peterlee sub-division are included in the total for Northumbria-Durham, and are not available separately.

The number of cases received by the Crown Prosecution Service, which include cases sent to the CPS by the police for pre-charge advice, for criminal proceedings, and for some non-criminal proceedings were as follows:

	Number
1990	72,825
1991	69,409
1992	68,475
[1]1993	33,816

[1] January to June.

Note: The number of cases received during a particular period does not equal the number finalised in that period, as incomplete cases will be carried over.

Of the cases received for criminal prosecution the numbers which proceeded to a hearing in the magistrates court, namely a summary trial, a guilty plea or committal proceedings, were as follows:

	Number
1990	52,400
1991	50,914
1992	50,060
[1]1993	24,359

[1] January to June.

Cases received for criminal prosecution would not proceed to such a hearing if the defendant could not be traced by the police, the court imposed a bind over or adjourned the case sine die or the CPS discontinued proceedings.

Police Cautions

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Attorney-General if he will publish the guidelines and policy on cautions for juvenile offenders which operate from the Crown Prosecution Service for the Metropolitan police.

The Attorney-General: Cautioning is a matter for the police. The Crown Prosecution Service does not issue guidelines to the police on cautioning, nor would it be appropriate for the CPS to do so.

Guidance to crown prosecutors on the prosecution, or other disposal, of cases involving juvenile offenders is contained in the code for crown prosecutors, which is a public document.

Gibraltar

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Attorney-General if he will make a statement on progress made to date by the RUC and the Director of Public Prosecutions Northern Ireland in their efforts to obtain information in Gibraltar relating to George Finbar Ross and the International Investments Ltd. Gibraltar—in liquidation—fraud.

The Attorney-General: I refer to the answer given by my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General on 21 July 1993, *Official Report*, column*242*, when he stated that:

"As a result of a Letter of Request for evidence in relation to the affairs of International Investments Ltd—in liquidation—issued by Belfast Magistrates' Court on 1 November 1990, the Supreme Court of Gibraltar made an Order on 16 June 1993 requiring witnesses named in the Letter of Request to attend before a Special Examiner on 12 July 1993 to give evidence on oath and produce documents.

A hearing took place on 12 and 13 July 1993. A number of witnesses were examined and their depositions recorded. The hearing has been adjourned to allow consideration to be given to certain documents which have now become available. It is anticipated that the hearing will recommence in October 1993."

The hearing recommenced on 19 October 1993 and continued on 20 and 22 October 1993. A number of further witnesses were examined and their depositions recorded.

The formal proceedings in Gibraltar are now complete. The Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland is presently awaiting receipt of the depositions which were recorded at the hearing before the special examiner. Following the hearing in Gibraltar a number of further inquiries remain to be undertaken.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Pension Fund

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Lord President of the Council what assessment he has made of whether the fees for management of the parliamentary contributory pension fund paid to the public trustee are adequate to ensure timely preparation of the annual accounts.

Mr. Newton: The management fees charged by the public trustee and agreed by the managing trustees are

considered sufficient to enable the public trustee to complete his contribution to the work on the annual accounts within a timescale acceptable to the managing trustees.

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Lord President of the Council why the accounts of the parliamentary contributory pension fund for the year ended 31 March 1992 were not printed until June 1993.

Mr. Newton: As a consequence of pension awards arising from the general election in April 1992, the Fees Office was not able to agree to the foreword to the accounts and certain parts of the accounts for 1991-92 until 23 September 1992. The public trustee sent the final accounts, which had been substantially audited, for certification by the Comptroller and Auditor-General on 3 December 1992. Further work was undertaken by the National Audit Office such that the accounts were not certified until 18 March 1993 and were subsequently published on 6 April 1993.

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will take steps to ensure that the accounts for the parliamentary contributory pension fund are produced within five months of the financial year end in future years.

Mr. Newton: Steps have already been taken to ensure earlier production of the accounts. The current aim is six months, against a seven-month deadline recommended by the Pension Law Review Committee under the chairmanship of Professor Goode, which we fully expect to achieve for years after 1992-93.

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will ensure that the accounts of the parliamentary contributory pension fund are prepared in accordance with best practice in the private sector and adopt appropriate accounting policies and presentation.

Mr. Newton: The format of the accounts is a matter for the managing trustees in conjunction with the Comptroller and Auditor-General. Discussions are taking place to ensure that the accounts are prepared in accordance with best practice. It should be noted, however, that even though they are not covered by the disclosure requirements of the Occupational Pensions Scheme (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 1986, nor by statement of recommended practice 1, disclosure and other relevant information has been made by the managing trustees to all Members.

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Lord President of the Council how long after the end of the accounting period the audit for the parliamentary contributory pension fund was completed; and what were the reasons for the time taken.

Mr. Newton: The audit of the 1992-93 accounts is not yet completed, but it is expected to be so within the next week. Whilst the six-months objective will not have been achieved, extra work had to be undertaken by the National Audit Office because of the pensions awarded as a result of the general election at the beginning of that year.

Lords Amendments

Mr. Allen: To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will list the occasions since 1979 on which the House has agreed to Lords amendments to Bills once they had been rejected by the Commons on a prior occasion.

Mr. Newton: The records show two examples of the House of Commons not insisting on its disagreement with the House of Lords on Lords amendments:

1. 12th June 1984 re Housing and Building Control Bill.
2. 5th November 1986 re Housing and Planning Bill.

Serjeant at Arms

Mr. Dicks: To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, representing the House of Commons Commission, what is the cost to public funds of the operation of the office of the Serjeant at Arms and of all the functions for which that office is responsible; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Beith: Details of the costs of Departments of the House are set out on page 7 of the 15th annual report of the House of Commons Commission (House of Commons Paper No. 820).

NORTHERN IRELAND

Community Psychiatric Nurses

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many community psychiatric nurses are employed by each area health board in Northern Ireland; and what is the average population assignment to each community psychiatric nurse in each health board in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Ancram: The number of community psychiatric nurses employed by each area health board in Northern Ireland at 30 June 1993 is as follows:

	Number
Eastern	108
Northern	23
Southern	21
Western	41

The average population assignment to each community psychiatric nurse in each health board is as follows:

	Number
Eastern 1:	4,555
Northern 1:	12,945
Southern 1:	9,976
Western 1:	4,490

Health and Social Services Boards

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what were the total payments including expenses and allowances paid in each of the past three years to the chairman of *(a)* each of the four area health and social services boards and *(b)* each of the four area health and social services councils; and what is the estimated population in each of these four areas.

Mr. Ancram: Total payments including expenses and allowances were as follows:

	Board Chairpersons £	*Council Chairpersons* £
1990-91		
Northern Board	16,444	—
Southern Board	15,026	—

	Board Chairpersons £	Council Chairpersons £
Eastern Board	25,792	—
Western Board	13,414	—
1991-92		
Northern Board	17,689	763
Southern Board	17,171	1,158
Eastern Board	27,106	1,003
Western Board	13,548	1,548
1992-93		
Northern Board	18,441	544
Southern Board	16,763	1,140
Eastern Board	26,368	2,024
Western Board	16,397	2,298

Population figures were as follows:

	30 June 1990	30 June 1991[1]	30 June 1992[1]
Northern Board	386,400	396,200	399,700
Southern Board	292,900	289,100	292,700
Eastern Board	647,600	646,400	652,100
Western Board	262,500	262,700	265,800

[1]Provisional

Respite Care

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what forms of financial assistance or allowance are available to a relative of a person who is permanently in care to take the person home for a period of respite at home.

Mr. Ancram: There is no special scheme of financial assistance available to a carer who provides respite at home for a person who is permanently resident in care. However, a relative who looks after a severely disabled person during a period of respite at home, may receive invalid care allowance if they satisfy the qualifying conditions. In addition, a carer premium may be payable to a carer claiming income support or housing benefit provided that the carer or his/her partner is receiving invalid care allowance.

Child Migrants

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will provide help to the Child Migrant Trust to enable former child migrants from Northern Ireland to trace their relatives there.

Mr. Ancram: Child migrant schemes mainly affected children from England and Wales. If former child migrants from Northern Ireland are involved, the Department of Health and Social Services would be prepared to consider an application for funding from the Child Migrants Trust in accordance with its policy on grants for voluntary organisations. To date, the Department has not received any such application.

Sellafield

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent representations he has received in regard to public concern over Sellafield.

Mr. Atkins: A number of representations have been received in recent months about Sellafield from district councils, Member of Parliament, environmental groups and some individuals. These have been seeking support for further consideration of the thermal oxide reprocessing plant by the Government before granting the authorisation. Concerns being expressed relate to possible increased levels of radioactivity.

Slipway, Portaferry

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultations he has had with the local community in Portaferry about the future of the ferry slipway at route A1, Portaferry; whether the future of this slipway has been directed to the attention of the International Fund for Ireland; and if he will make a statement about the future of this slipway.

Mr. Atkins: The Department of the Environment has consulted with the traffic police, Ards borough council and statutory undertakers about a proposal to abandon the slipway. The Department is also considering a planning application from Portaferry regeneration group to use the slipway for temporary berthing facilities and this application will be subject to consultation with Ards borough council. The question about the International Fund for Ireland is a matter for the fund and not the Government. No statement can be issued about the future of the slipway until the statutory processes have been completed.

Enterprise Ulster

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will place in the Library a copy of the report he commissioned from KPMG on Enterprise Ulster.

Mr. Atkins: Responsibility for the subject in question has been delegated to the Training and Employment Agency under its chief executive, Mr. Julian Crozier. I have asked him to provide you with the information requested.

Letter from J. S. Crozier to Mr. Andrew Hunter, dated 4 November 1993:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will place in the library a copy of the report he commissioned from KPMG on Enterprise Ulster. The Secretary of State has passed your question to me, as Chief Executive of the Training and Employment Agency for reply.

This report was commissioned by the Agency as part of an exercise to consider options for Enterprise Ulster's future development having regard to the Agency's aims and objectives.

This was essentially an internal review. When decisions have been taken by Ministers on Enterprise Ulster they will I am sure be made public. Meanwhile however I would not consider it appropriate to place the report in the library.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful on this occasion.

Consultants

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what was the cost of the consultants' merit award system in 1990-91 in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Ancram: Data on the cost of merit awards are not readily available, but an estimate based on the values of awards during 1990-91 and the number of award holders at that time puts the costs at around £2·6 million.

Suicide

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many suicides were reported of patients receiving *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* out-patient psychiatric care in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* The number of psychiatric hospital in-patients who have committed suicide while in hospital are given. Information on people receiving out-patient psychiatric care who have commited suicide is not available centrally.

Year of registration of death[1]	*Number*[2]
1988	3
1989	1
1990	1
1991	0
1992	1

[1] This may not be the year in which death occurred.
[2] These figures do not include people who absented themselves from hospital before committing suicide.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Charter Mark

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many organisations have applied for a charter mark; and how many have been awarded.

Mr. Waldegrave: In 1993, 411 charter mark applications were received from organisations throughout the public sector and the privatised utilities. Ninety-three awards were made to those organisations that demonstrated evidence of the highest levels of service to their customers. In 1992, 296 organisations submitted applications, and 36 awards were made.

Science Summit

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what contribution Her Majesty's Government made to the European science summit convened by the European Commission in October; and if he will make a statement on the achievements of the summit.

Mr. Waldegrave: I shall write to the hon. Member.

Agencies

Mr. Michael Spicer: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list for each of the last 10 years the number of people employed by agencies set up over the last 10 years to replace civil service functions.

Mr. Waldegrave: Executive agencies set up as part of the next steps initiative remain part of the civil service, and staff working in them continue to be civil servants.

"Official Report"

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what is the estimated circulation of the *Official Report* in its daily, weekly and bound volume versions together with the retail cost of each at 1993 prices for each of the years 1963, 1973, 1983 and 1992; what proportion in each year were purchased for official purposes; and how many were sold to the public at the indicated prices.

Mr. David Davis: The price for the three editions of the *Official Report* in each of the specified years, together with the sum expressed at 1993 prices—using the long-term index of prices of consumer goods and services, as calculated by the Central Statistical Office—is as follows:

	Daily		*Weekly*		*Bound Volume*	
	Actual	*At 1993 prices*	*Actual*	*At 1993 prices*	*Actual*	*At 1993 prices*
November 1963	1s 6d	0·79p	4s 6d	£2·36	£1 5s 0d	£13·14
November 1973	0·18p	£1·09	0·50p	£3·30	£3·75	£22·76
November 1983	£1·00	£1·69	£2·75	£4·66	£21·00	£35·56
November 1992	£7·50		£22·00		£90·00	

For many years the prices of the *Official Report (Hansard)* were heavily subsidised. In 1983, when the annual subsidy stood at £6 million, the Government decided progressively to reduce the level of subsidy received, by a combination of price increases and improved methods of production. The November 1991 price increase to £7·50 eliminated the subsidy and further technological advances enabled this price to be held throughout the 1992-93 Session.

The printing, finishing and distribution of the *Official Report* was market tested earlier this year. The award of the contract to the in-house bid submitted by HMSO's Parliamentary Press will achieve ongoing savings in manpower and overheads. As a result, HMSO has announced that the price of *Hansard*, and other routine —scale priced—parliamentary papers will not be increased during the life of the present Parliament.

The estimated average sales and the estimated proportions sold to official customers and others are as follows:

	Daily			*Weekly*			*Bound Volume*		
	Estimated average sales	*Official*	*Others*	*Estimated average sales*	*Official*	*Others*	*Estimated average sales*	*Official*	*Others*
		Per cent.	*Per cent.*		*Per cent.*	*Per cent.*		*Per cent.*	*Per cent.*
1983	5,221			1,488			1,026		
1992	3,731	85	15	1,210	60	40	907	65	35

Figures for earlier years, and proportions of official sales and other sales in 1983, are not available.

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Queen's Counsel

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what assessment he has made of the cost in money and time of his system for vetting and appointing Queen's Counsel and for consulting judges on the subject.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The costs involved in the work relating to applications for appointment as Queen's Counsel form part of the overall costs of the headquarters of the Lord Chancellor's Department and cannot readily be isolated. However, broad estimates suggest that in 1993-94 the process may account for costs of the order of £100,000, including about 650 staff days of the time of the officials most directly involved. These figures contain notional elements for postage and stationery and certain other items which may understate the full cost. They do not include any element for the time of the judges.

Land Ownership

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, pursuant to his answer of 25 October, *Official Report*, column *422*, what are the circumstances in the Land Registry which prevent the assessment of foreign ownership of land in England and Wales; and what steps he intends to take to make this information available.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The Land Registration Acts 1925-88 do not require applicants for registration to state their nationality. There are no plans at present to introduce such a requirement.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what are his Department's estimates for the offshore banking centres' ownership of the foreign ownership of the acreage of England and Wales.

Mr. John M. Taylor: No information is held on which such an estimate could be based.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what are his Department's estimates for the acreage of England and Wales under foreign ownership.

Mr. John M. Taylor: No information is held on which such an estimate could be based.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Butter

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what is the level of butter held in United Kingdom public intervention or private storage facilities under the intervention stock scheme in each of the last 20 months;

(2) what is the level of sales from and purchases to intervention stocks of butter in each of the last 20 months.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: Responsibility for this matter is delegated to the Intervention Board executive agency and I have asked the chief executive to reply to the hon. Gentleman direct.

Letter from G. Stapleton to Mr. Ian Davidson, dated 5 November 1993:

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has asked me to reply to your written Parliamentary Questions (2341 and 2346) tabled for answer on 4 November as the matters are within the operational responsibility of this Agency.

"To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

(2341) what is the level of butter held in United Kingdom public intervention of private storage facilities under the intervention stock scheme in each of the last 20 months.

(2346) what is the level of sales from and purchases to intervention stocks of butter in each of the last 20 months"

The information requested is set out in the attached table.

I am sending a copy of this letter, together with a copy of the table, to the House of Commons Library and the Public Information Office.

Intervention butter
Tonnes

End of:	*Purchases*[1]	*Sales*[1]	*Stocks*[1]	*Private storage*[2]
March 1992	nil	1,094	18,116	3,161
April 1992	nil	371	17,745	5,019
May 1992	nil	475	17,270	6,982
June 1992	nil	763	16,507	8,886
July 1992	nil	498	16,009	9,895
August 1992	nil	5,854	10,155	10,559
September 1992	nil	214	9,941	7,469
October 1992	nil	nil	9,941	5,960
November 1992	nil	nil	9,941	nil
December 1992	nil	nil	9,941	nil
January 1993	nil	nil	9,941	nil
February 1993	nil	nil	9,941	nil
March 1993	340	215	10,066	463
April 1993	1,160	178	11,048	1,525
May 1993	nil	20	11,028	2,666
June 1993	nil	80	10,948	3,987
July 1993	353	nil	11,301	4,431
August 1993	1,819	4,324	8,796	5,350
September 1993	440	nil	9,236	4,593
October 1993	nil	nil	9,236	3,752

[1] Butter purchased by the Intervention Board and held in store until release is authorised by the EC Commission.
[2] Butter in the ownership of public and private companies temporarily removed from the market under aided private storage contracts.
[3] This includes 3,621 tonnes of butter made available for free distribution under the surplus food arrangements in 1992.

Warble Fly

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the number of reported cases of warble fly infestation in imported cattle *(a)* since 1 January and *(b)* for the comparative period in each of the previous three years.

Mr. Soames: I shall write to the hon. Member.

Horses

Dr. Strang: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the horse population of the United Kingdom in each year since 1974.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: No official figures are available for the total equine population but the agricultural departments periodically collect information on horses kept on agricultural holdings. Figures for the years of collection after 1973 are shown in the table:

Horses and ponies on agricultural and horticultural holdings in the United Kingdom

Year	*'000 head*[1]
1979	186
1983	[2]167
1990	[2]183
1992	[2]231
1993	[3]247

[1] Figures include estimates for minor holdings for England and Wales but not for Scotland and Northern Ireland.
[2] Excludes ponies in Northern Ireland.
[3] Provisional.
Source: June census for each year.

Farm Incomes

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what are her estimates for total income from farming in each of the last 15 years, the number of farmers in the United Kingdom for a comparable period and the average farm income for the same years.

Mr. Jack: The table shows the estimates for each year from 1978 to 1992 of total income from farming, which represents the total income from agriculture of the group with an entrepreneurial interest in the industry—farmers and spouses, non-principal partners and directors and their spouses and family workers—and the number of farmers, partners and directors in the United Kingdom engaged in farm work. It is not possible to calculate a meaningful measure of average farm income from these figures. Information on average farm incomes is collected from sample surveys and the results for each type of farm are published annually in "Farm Incomes in the United Kingdom". This publication is available in the Library of the House.

	Total income from farming (£ million)	*Number of farmers, partners and directors (doing farm work) (thousands)*
1978	1,572	303·3
1979	1,511	303·9
1980	1,484	297·9
1981	1,846	293·6
1982	2,226	292·8
1983	1,866	289·6
1984	2,689	292·2
1985	1,647	290·3
1986	2,104	288·9
1987	2,169	284·5
1988	1,810	284·2
1989	2,290	283·3
1990	2,350	281·6
1991	2,452	278·6
1992[1]	2,831	280·5

[1] Provisional.

Hill Livestock Compensatory Allowances

Dr. Strang: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the value of hill livestock compensatory allowances in both nominal and real terms payable per head in respect of ewes, hardy breed ewes and suckler cows maintained on severely disadvantaged and disadvantaged land in each year since 1979.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: The information requested is not yet available. Comparable information compiled for the autumn review of hill livestock compensatory allowances in 1992 is available in the Library of the House. An updated version will be included in the information placed in the Library when the outcome of the current review is announced on 30 November.

Fishing Vessels

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many cases were investigated by fishery officers of the inspectorate of fisheries of vessels contravening the under 10 m licensing regulations.

Mr. Jack: The Fisheries Department is in the final stages of completing the licensing of fishing vessels of 10 m overall length and under. No prosecutions have so far been taken but as part of their ongoing enforcement responsibilities, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's sea fisheries inspectorate has made it clear that vessels fishing for profit must be licensed in accordance with the provisions of the Sea Fish Licensing Order 1992 (SI 1992/2633) as varied by SIs 1993/188 and 1993/2291.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will make a further statement on the spread of bovine tuberculosis in the south-west region since 1 January; what measures her Department is taking to curb it; and what progress has been made to date.

Mr. Soames: There have been 153 confirmed cases of tuberculosis in the south-west region up to the end of September compared with 97 cases for that period in 1992.

When an outbreak of disease is detected, action is taken to prevent the spread of disease from the premises concerned by the slaughter of affected animals and movement restrictions. An investigation is carried out to ascertain the cause of the breakdown and if badgers are thought to be involved then appropriate action is taken in line with the interim strategy recommended in the report on badgers and bovine tuberculosis presented to the Department by Professor Dunnet in 1986.

We are reviewing the current badger control arrangements. As part of this review members of the consultative panel on badgers and bovine tuberculosis and I attended a seminar on 3 November which considered the latest position of scientific research into this complex issue in Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The panel will be discussing the way forward on badger control arrangements at its meeting on 18 November. The Government will need to consider carefully the views of the panel before making an announcement.

Cash Limits

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer of 1 November to the hon. Member for Waveney (Mr. Porter), *Official Report*, columns *39-40*, if she will disaggregate the reduction in expenditure on agriculture schemes announced in her answer.

Mr. Jack: The changes to estimated expenditure on agricultural schemes flow from lower than expected claims by farmers. The details are as follows:

	£'000s
Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme	11,047
Optional Set-aside Scheme	1,190
Payments Under Closed Capital Grant and Related Schemes	1,083
Group Marketing Grant	280
Farm Woodland Scheme	187
Grants for the Encouragement of Co-operation in Agriculture and Horticulture (Great Britain)	175
Farm Woodland Premium Scheme	141
Other	1,400
Total	15,423

Organic Producers

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what representations she has received since her announcement on 11 August on the agri-environment programme about the exclusion of current organic producers from the scheme.

Mr. Jack: Since the Minister made her announcement of the proposed organic aid scheme she has received 241 letters asking her to reconsider the decision not to aid existing organic producers. The vast majority of these were from producers who said that they already followed organic methods.

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what is her estimate of the amounts to be paid per hectare for organic support in each European Community member country in the year 1993-94.

Mr. Jack: This information is not available as the EC Commission has yet to approve any organic programmes under the agri-environment regulation.

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what will be the predicted effect on existing organic producers of the new agri-environment package she announced on 11 August.

Mr. Jack: I shall write to the hon. Member.

Animal Welfare

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many journeys of animals exceeding the 15 hour interval for feeding and watering she has authorised since 1 January.

Mr. Soames: Journeys of farm livestock may exceed 15 hours provided that the transporter complies with the requirements of the Welfare of Animals during Transport Order 1992, including those relating to the provision of rest, food and water.

Animal Exports

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many animals have been exported to other EC member states from the United Kingdom since 1 January.

Mr. Soames: Information on trade with other EC member states is not currently available. I shall write to the hon. Member when it is.

Pig Producers

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what measures are being taken to ensure fair competition between pig producers in European Community countries.

Mr. Jack: Whilst pig producers operate in a free market it is vital that there should be no hidden subsidies which could distort competition. We always take up any such cases with the European Commission when we hear of them. I recently wrote to Commissioner Stechen when I learnt of French proposals for aid to the French pig industry to ask him to investigate the matter urgently and to make sure that no payments were made that contravened Community rules.

Heifers (Deaths)

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what answer she has received from the Government of the Netherlands to her representations regarding the deaths of heifers during the ferry crossing from Holland to Harwich on 10 June.

Mr. Soames: The Department carried out a full investigation into the circumstances of the incident with the co-operation of Essex county council. We have expressed concern to the authorities in Holland and all the information from the investigation is being passed to them for appropriate action to be taken. The Commission has been informed about the case and the Government have emphasised the importance they attach to proper enforcement of animal welfare safeguards.

Land Sales

Sir Grylls: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what plans she has to require county councils to sell their holdings of agricultural land.

Mr. Michael Jack: I have no such plans.

Arable Crops

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what are the differences between England and Scotland in methodology used to analyse regional base area for arable crops; and what proposals she has to co-ordinate the systems used.

Mr. Jack: The methodology used to calculate the regional base area and to establish whether it has been exceeded is the same for all regions and is laid down in the EC legislation governing the arable area payments scheme.

Rabbits

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will give details of the occasions since 1963 when her Ministry has exercised its powers under the Pests Act 1954 to make rabbit clearance orders in England and Wales; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Soames: Rabbit clearance orders were made by the Minister for areas throughout England and Wales during the years 1955 to 1957. Sixty-one orders, which covered counties or parts of counties, were consolidated in 1972 into the Rabbit Clearance Order No. 148 (England and Wales). Under this order the whole of England and Wales, except the City of London, the Isles of Scilly and Skokholm island, is designated a rabbit clearance area. Landowners and occupiers have an obligation to kill or take rabbits living on or resorting to their land or, where this is not reasonably practicable, to prevent rabbits from causing damage.

Milk Marketing Scheme

Dame Peggy Fenner: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many letters of concern she has received on the length of time allowed for consultations for the reorganised milk marketing scheme.

Mr. Jack: My right hon. Friend has received two such letters.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many letters she has received regarding the size of the consultation document regarding the reorganisation of the milk marketing scheme.

Mr. Jack: My right hon. Friend has received no such letters.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what period she has allowed for consultation on the reorganisation of the milk marketing scheme; and what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the consultation period for the collection of consumer views.

Mr. Jack: I shall write to the hon. Member.

Codex Alimentarius Commission

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will make a statement on the accountability provisions to national Parliaments to be included in the Codex Alimentarius Commission to be established under the general agreement on tariffs and trade.

Mr. Soames: The codex alimentarius is a set of world food standards that have been developed over the past 30 years, designed both to protect consumers and to facilitate world trade in foodstuffs. The Codex Alimentarius Commission, which is the Food and Agriculture Organisation—World Health Organisation joint food standards programme, is an intergovernmental body and thus the decisions reached by it are those reached by Governments. GATT will bring with it a subsidiary agreement—the sanitary and phytosanitary agreement—whereby the international standards agreed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission in the food area will be regarded as the international norm in cases of trade disputes that come forward for adjudication under the GATT procedure.

Commodity Storage Costs

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how much was spent on public storage for each commodity in *(a)* the European Community and *(b)* the United Kingdom, in each year since 1987; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 1 November 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member.

WALES

Cattle Identification Documents

Mr. Hanson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans he has to simplify the cattle identification document scheme in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: I am considering the possibilities for simplifying the arrangements for cattle identification documents. My officials have asked the industry for its views.

Cardiff Bay

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what consultations he has had with the European Environment Commissioner in relation to their proposed visit to Cardiff bay and the Lower Severn estuary proposed special protection area as announced in the oral answer to question H952/93 of 27 October, of Hemmo Muntingh MEP to Commissioner Paleoskrasses.

Mr. Redwood: None.

Grant-maintained Schools

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what amount was granted to the Grant Maintained Schools Centre Ltd. in 1992-93; under what statutory powers; and what services his Department received from the centre.

Sir Wyn Roberts: In 1992-93, my Department made a grant of £30,000 to the Grant Maintained Schools Centre. The grant was made pursuant to regulation 15 of the Education (Grant) Regulations 1990 (SI 1990-1989). The GMSC offers advice about grant-maintained status to schools in Wales both prior to and after the date of incorporation.

Poverty

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received recently on poverty in the Principality.

Mr. Redwood: I have recently received a copy of the pamphlet entitled "Politics of Poverty in Blaenau Gwent" of which the hon. Gentleman is a co-author.

Consultants

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the cost of the consultants' merit award system in 1990-91 in Wales.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: In 1990-91, financial returns shows a total of £4,105,000 paid in merit awards to consultants in the NHS in Wales.

Training and Enterprise Councils

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the budget for each TEC in Wales in 1993-94.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The budgets currently contracted with each TEC in Wales are shown in the following table:

TEC budgets for 1993-94 as at 1 November 1993

TEC	*£ million*
Gwent	16·832
Mid Glamorgan	19·679
North East Wales	11·002
North West Wales	13·648
Powys	4·264
South Glamorgan	12·079
West Wales	26·740

Cardiff Bay Development Corporation

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he has completed the financial management and policy review into the Cardiff Bay development corporation; and if he will make it his policy to place a copy of the review in the Library.

Mr. Redwood *[holding answer 28 October 1993]:* I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Hospital Waiting Lists

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish a table showing the number of people awaiting hospital treatment in each Welsh health authority in *(a)* March 1990, *(b)* March 1992, *(c)* June 1993 and *(d)* September 1993.

Mr. Redwood: I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible.

Anthrax Spores

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the contamination of land by anthrax spores in South Wales.

Mr. Redwood: I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Newspapers

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will refer the issues of pricing of loss-making newspapers and of ownership of national titles beyond 20 per cent. market share for review under fair trading and monopolies legislation.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: No. The Director General of Fair Trading, Sir Bryan Carsberg, announced on 14 October that, following preliminary investigations by his office into allegations that the reduction in the cover price of *The Times* was predatory pricing, he would not be initiating formal action under the competition legislation. The Director General is satisfied that on the basis of the information available the reduction in the cover price of *The Times* reflects a calculated commercial decision by News International which he would not be justified in treating as predatory.

One-stop Advice Shops

Mr. Colvin: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many one-stop shops for advice for businesses have been established and in which locations, in his pilot scheme; and if he will make a statement on their future.

Mr. McLoughlin: Firm offers of grant have been made to three areas and one-stop shops are open in Birmingham and Leicester. They are now known as business links. Ten more areas are well advanced with their business plans and I anticipate around 40 business links will be open by April next year. Eventually a national network of around 200 business links will provide local access points for business support services.

Maggot Dying

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the continued use of the banned substance chrysoidine in the maggot dying process; and what further proposals he has to enforce the ban.

Mr. McLoughlin: Chrysoidine is not a banned substance although the Department of Health has considered the potential risk, especially of cancer, posed to anglers by chrysoidine on a number of occasions in the past. When it was last reviewed in 1985, the Department of Health reaffirmed its earlier advice that it would be prudent for anglers who wanted to use chrysoidine to avoid skin contact with the dye by, for example, using gloves when handling the dye or when baiting hooks with dyed maggots. The Government conveyed this advice to the National Federation of Anglers and the angling press at the time.

Publishing

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the impact of industrial competitiveness of subsidies, direct or indirect, to publishing in other EC countries; and what representations he has made to the European Commission on this matter.

Mr. Sainsbury: I have made no such representations about publishing, but my Department very regularly takes

up complaints with the Commission on behalf of business in all sectors of industry. I am concerned that United Kingdom firms should not lose business unfairly to competitors in other member states and will pursue vigorously any cases brought to our attention.

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what representations he has received about the potential impact on industrial competitiveness from imposition of VAT on books.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: A number of representations have been received on this subject from organisations connected with the publishing industry. Taxation is a matter for my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Landmines

Mr. Mullin: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) if he will list the countries to which British companies have exported landmines in each of the last five years;

(2) what estimate he has of the total output of landmines in United Kingdom factories during each of the last five years.

Mr. Needham: There has been no United Kingdom output or export of conventional anti-personnel ground mines in the last five years. In the time available I have not been able to obtain details of other forms of landmines. I am, however, making inquiries and I will write to the hon. Member.

Furniture and Clothing (Safety)

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many representations he has received urging that the policy of deregulation should not weaken existing consumer protection legislation in respect of fire risk and poisonous gases in furniture and clothing.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: My Department has received 31 representations that there should be no change to the Nightwear (Safety) Regulations 1985 and 72 representations that there should be no change to the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 as amended.

EC Retex Scheme

Mr. Pike: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the current position with British schemes under the EC Retex initiative.

Mr. McLoughlin: In Great Britain, £4·4 million of RETEX grant is available. 66 applications were received, for over £9 million. Twenty-five projects have so far been approved by the programme monitoring committee, for over £3 million of grant. The programme is expected to be fully committed by December 1993.

EC Assistance

Mr. David Porter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the status of the bids on behalf of *(a)* Lowestoft and *(b)* the Waveney valley for EC structural fund assistance; and when he expects all details to be finalised.

Mr. Sainsbury: Lowestoft and the Waveney valley are included in the Government's proposals for areas to receive grants from the funds under objectives 2 and 5(b) respectively. The Government's proposals were fowarded to the European Commission on 7 October. The Commission is now considering all the proposals from all the member states concerned. The final decisions are expected in December.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his Department or local authorities will match pound for pound any structural funding forthcoming from the EC by the end of this calendar year.

Mr. McLoughlin: The European structural funds make grants at various percentage rates towards the cost of a wide variety of projects undertaken by various beneficiaries, including Government Departments, local authorities, and many others. That part of the cost of each project which is not met by the funds is the responsibility of the beneficiary, and will continue to be so.

Ms Quin: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will give a breakdown by standard planning region of the total amount of outstanding contracts and payments from the EC structural funds for the current allocation.

Mr. McLoughlin: This information is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the relationship between objective 2 areas and assisted areas; and what representations have been made by the Government to the European Commission on behalf of *(a)* non-assisted areas in Britain currently having objective 2 status and *(b)* assisted areas holding objective 2 status.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* There is no direct connection between the objective 2 and United Kingdom assisted areas maps.

I have made no representations to the European Commission since I sent to Brussels on 7 October the United Kingdom's list of proposed areas for designation under objectives 2 and 5b.

I published that list in my reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Dorset, South (Mr. Bruce) on 22 October, *Official Report,* column *723-24.*

Multilateral Trade Organisation

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what proposals have been put forward by Her Majesty's Government to increase the transparency of operation of the proposed multilateral trade organisation.

Mr. Needham: Proposals to increase the transparency of the proposed dispute settlement arrangement which will operate after the implementation of the Uruguay round in GATT have been made informally by a number of participants. The European Commission, which negotiates on behalf of the Community, is at present considering its response to these proposals, in consultation with the United Kingdom and other member states. In principle, the United Kingdom welcomes proposals which would increase the transparency of the dispute settlement system, particularly in view of the increasing level of interest shown in GATT dispute settlement procedures, especially where environmental questions are concerned.

Cohesion Fund

Mr. Tyler: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the estimated total United Kingdom contribution to the European Community cohesion fund over the next seven years; which member states are expected to benefit from it; and what criteria will be used to determine the eligibility of infrastructure projects, with particular reference to schemes to meet bathing water quality and urban waste water directives.

Mr. Sainsbury: The estimated United Kingdom contribution to the European cohesion fund over the seven-year period 1993 to 1999, net of abatement, is 750 million ecu, about £575 million, at 1992 prices. The beneficiary member states are Spain, Portugal, Greece and the Republic of Ireland.

The governing regulation contains no specific reference to the bathing water quality and urban waste water directives, but grant-aided environmental projects are required to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of Article 130r of the Treaty.

Debts (Prompt Payments)

Ms Walley: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will issue a code of practice regarding the payment of accounts by debtors within the stated period allowed and agreed.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Government already support the CBI prompt payers code, which is a code of practice to encourage prompt payment of debts. DTI also publishes a guide to cash flow management for small firms.

Postage Rates

Mr. Beith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will publish *(a)* the price of sending an addressed domestic first class ordinary letter within each OECD country and *(b)* the price of sending an addressed ordinary letter to any other OECD country from each OECD country in the form of three-cross tables each showing the cost in (i) domestic currency, (ii) ECUs and (iii) pound sterling.

Mr. McLoughlin: The cost of sending a first class letter in the United Kingdom is 25p. The tariffs for sending letters to all other countries in the OECD are published in the leaflet "The Easy Way to Mail Abroad", a copy of which is freely available at the House of Commons Post Office.

No systematic information on tariffs between other countries is held by either the Department of Trade and Industry or the Post Office.

Mr. Mohammed Hashemi

Mr. Byers: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he or his officials last met Mr. Mohammed Hashemi.

Mr. Needham: I am unaware of any such meeting having taken place.

Post Office

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what expenditures have so far been committed in the 1993-94 year for consultancy work to *(a)* Kleinwort Benson and *(b)* others on the privatisation of the Post Office; and what were the outturn costs of the review for consultants and others in 1992-93.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Department has received advice on the Post Office Review and the sale of Parcelforce from Kleinwort Benson, KPMG Peat Marwick, Price Waterhouse and McKennas. The Department spent £922,010·59 in 1992-93 on such advice. Thus far in 1993-94, £213,607·44 has been spent from within class IV, vote 1, subhead C3. Details of amounts paid to individual consultants are commercially confidential.

Konver Programme

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will place in the Library a document showing the allocation methodology for the Konver programme, and the overall score and rank of each country together with the percentages, scores and rank for each indicator.

Mr. McLoughlin: Yes. I have today arranged for copies to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mrs. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list, according to actions 1 to 6, and by region *(a)* the proposal submitted for the Konver programme and *(b)* those approved.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member.

Offshore Safety

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list all grants awarded by the Offshore Supplies Office or the Marine Technology Support Unit to assist the development of escape systems following the Cullen report, together with the size and the year of approval for each grant; and what moneys have been recovered from sales of grant-aided equipment and systems.

Mr. Eggar: To Telescape UK Ltd. grants of £11,820 in 1990; £19,023 in 1991; £28,732 in 1991; and £13,558 in 1993; to Sir James Laing and Sons Ltd. a grant of £32,500 in 1990.

No moneys have been recovered from sales of these equipment and systems.

St. Helena

Mr. Cummings: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the level of exports to and imports from St. Helena to the United Kingdom during the last five years.

Mr. Needham: The information is given in the following table:

United Kingdom Trade with St. Helena

	United Kingdom Imports £000	*United Kingdom Exports £000*
1988	205	6,103
1989	504	7,208
1990	555	7,429
1991	820	6,980
1992	691	7,336

Source: Business Monitor MA20, Overseas Trade Statistics of the United Kingdom.

Coal Mines

Mr. Cummings: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will commission an inquiry into the consequences of methane emissions from old mine workings in urban areas in County Durham where coal mines have closed.

Mr. Eggar: Procedures adopted for abandoning mine workings are a matter for British Coal. Where British Coal abandons a mine, it undertakes a detailed analysis of the most appropriate measures to be incorporated in the abandonment procedures, having regard to statutory requirements and the safety of employees and the public. As part of this process, consideration is given to the potential for methane emissions and appropriate action taken where necessary.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the President of the Board of Trade who will be responsible for the cost of pumping operations in County Durham when the remaining collieries are privatised or closed.

Mr. Eggar: The allocation of environmental responsibilities in the privatisation process is under consideration. The Government will ensure that British Coal's current role in respect of the physical legacy of historic mining will be continued after privatisation.

Electricity Generation

Mr. O'Neill: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his Department's stated intention in its White Paper, "The Prospects for Coal" to work towards a figure of 1,500 MW of new electricity generating capacity from renewable sources for the United Kingdom as a whole by 2000, relates to declared net generating capacity.

Mr. Eggar: I will write to the hon. Member.

Renewable Energy

Mr. O'Neill: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) if his Department has yet obtained final clearance from the EC Commission for the extension of non-fossil fuel obligation support for renewable energy beyond 1998;

(2) what plans he has to replace the system of band strike pricing for renewable orders under the third non-fossil fuel obligation plan.

Mr. Eggar: I will write to the hon. Member.

Energy Supplies

Mr. O'Neill: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is his Department's latest estimate of *(a)* installed electricity generating capacity and *(b)* declared net capacity from renewable energy sources in the United Kingdom; and what percentage of each of these totals received support under the non-fossil fuel obligation.

Mr. Eggar: I will write to the hon. Member.

Quality Assurance Certification

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what criteria have to be satisfied before companies which offer quality assurance certification are accredited by the National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies.

Mr. McLoughlin: The National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies recommends certification bodies for accreditation by my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade. Certification bodies are assessed by NACCB against the European standards EN 45011, 45012 and 45013, which lay down general criteria for bodies operating certification of products, quality systems, and personnel respectively. Bodies must in addition satisfy NACCB's criteria of competence and regulations governing accreditation or recognition. I have arranged for copies of these documents to be placed in the Library.

Mr. Alexander Schultz

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects to complete his investigation into the business activities of Alexander Schultz.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: My Department does not investigate the affairs of individuals other than those subject to bankruptcy proceedings.

Atomic Energy Inspections

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what support was given to the rationalisation of inspection responsibilities between the International Atomic Energy Agency and EURATOM, in the United Kingdom submission to the 37th IAEA general conference of 27 September.

Mr. Eggar: The United Kingdom has supported the initiatives which are now in hand to improve the cost effectiveness of safeguards and attaches particular importance to the rationalisation of inspection responsibilities between the agency and Euratom. Considerable progress has already been made with the new partnership approach. We look forward to the successful completion of current negotiations on the new partnership approach and will continue to urge its full implementation as soon as possible.

Iraq and Jordan (Exports)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many export licences and supply licences issued to companies in respect of exports to Iraq since August 1990 were withdrawn on 28 September; how many have subsequently been restored; and how many new ones have been granted.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The number of export and supply licences revoked on 28 September were:

	Number
Export licences	1,506
Supply licences	273
TOTAL	1,779

All licences granted after 28 September are new licences. Of these, 46 were issued to replace licences which had been revoked, and 41 were in respect of new applications.

No new licences to replace revoked supply licences have yet been issued.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many export licences or supply licences have been granted for exports to Jordan since August 1990; and how many such licences previously granted have been operative after August 1990.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* A total of 300 export licences have been issued for Jordan between August 1990 and October 1993. There have been no supply licences issued.

It is not possible to identify those licences issued before August 1990 which were still valid after that date.

The statistics given for Jordan reflects application for licences where Jordan was the final destination of the goods. It should be noted that most of the exports to Iraq for which a United Kingdom export or supply licence has been issued in accordance with United Nations sanctions will have been shipped through Jordan.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the number of export licence and supply licence applications to *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Jordan since August 1990, indicating the number of cases where (i) licences were refused and (ii) no licence was deemed to be required.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* The information is as follows:

Iraq

Applications for Export and Supply Licence received or refused since August 1990 are as follows:

	Number
(i) Export licences applied for	2,798
Licences refused	510
(ii) Supply licences applied for	704
Licences refused	165

Note:

Licences are required for the export of all goods to Iraq.

Jordan

Applications for Export and Supply Licence received or refused since August 1990 are as follows:

	Number
(i) Export licences applied for	424
Licences refused	9
Licence not required	55

Notes:

No supply licences have been issued for Jordan.

The statistics given for Jordan reflect applications for licences where Jordan was the final destination of the goods. It should be noted that most of the exports to Iraq for which a United Kingdom export or supply licence has been issued in accordance with United Nations sanctions will have been shipped through Jordan.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many inquiries his Department are making into export licences, supply licences or other exports from Britain whose end use was Jordan since August 1990 which are or may be in breach of the sanctions regime applied to Iraq; and what action is being taken.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 3 November 1993]:* It is not the Government's practice to discuss any investigations, ongoing or otherwise, in which DTI is involved.

Lebanese Reconstruction Programme

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what estimate has been made of the value of contracts awarded in the Lebanese reconstruction programme up to the nearest available date in electricity, water and sewerage, communications, transport, health and education sectors; and what share in each sector has been won by British companies.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* Lebanon has, reportedly, awarded a number of contracts as part of its redevelopment plans. These are, however, at an early stage. We do not yet have access to figures that would enable us to estimate their value for the sectors listed, or the share of such contracts which might have been secured by British companies. United Kingdom exports to Lebanon totalled £92 million in 1992 and have grown by about 40 per cent. so far this year.

Steel Industry

Mr. John Morris: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment he has made of the degree of rationalisation of the British steel industry and that of producers in Spain, Germany, France and Italy; and if he will make it his policy to raise with the European Commission any breach by another EC country of the European Coal and Steel Community policies on rationalisation.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, Central (Mr. Cousins) on 8 March 1993, *Official Report*, col. *407*. The Government will continue to work with the European Commission and other member states to ensure the rigorous application of state aid rules and the elimination of subsidies.

TRANSPORT

Shipping Industry

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been spent on support to the British shipping industry in each year since 1979; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: Details of the Department's financial support for shipping services over this period are given in "The Government's Expenditure Plans" and "The Government's Expenditure Plans for Transport". Copies of both are available in the Library.

Company Cars

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will update the answer to the hon. Member for Peckham (Ms Harman) of 25 February, *Official Report*, columns *693-94*, relating to company cars.

Mr. Key: For the 12 months to September 1993, there were 896,000 new car registrations in a company name, 51 per cent. of all new car registrations in Great Britain. Registrations in a company name include hire cars and company cars not available for private use.

The Inland Revenue estimates that about 1·8 million employees in the United Kingdom are currently taxed on the private use of a company car.

Vehicle Testing Stations

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has for the future of Crown immunity for vehicle inspectorate testing stations, with regard to all health and safety laws and regulations, following privatisation.

Mr. Key: The vehicle inspectorate already complies with health and safety legislation, but, under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, as a Crown body, it is immune from prosecution. If the testing activities of the inspectorate were transferred to a private sector employer, that immunity would be removed. My right hon. Friend will not reach a final decision on the future of vehicle inspectorate testing until he has had an opportunity to consider a report by external consultants on the scope for transfer to the private sector, and consulted those trades unions concerned on his provisional conclusions.

Air Carriers and Airports

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking in his negotiations with the United States authorities to ensure that individual United Kingdom air carriers or airports are not advantaged at the expense of other United Kingdom carriers or regional airports.

Mr. Norris: We are seeking a liberalised air services agreement with the US that will be in the interest of the United Kingdom as a whole. The United Kingdom team includes representatives from the United Kingdom airlines currently operating scheduled services on the north Atlantic and representatives from the Airport Operators' Association.

Public Service Vehicle Operators Licences

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what checks are carried out by his staff to ensure that negative answers to question 20, relating to criminal convictions, on form PSV421 "Application for a Public Service Vehicle Operators Licence" are truthful.

Mr. Freeman: Full records of criminal convictions are not available to the traffic commissioners or traffic area offices. However, all applications for PSV operator licences are published in advance of the grant of a licence and circulated to the police, who have a statutory right to make a formal objection to a licence being granted. In some cases, checks may also be made of any records held by the vehicle inspectorate on the applicant.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what checks are carried out by his staff to ensure that negative answers to questions 17, 18 and 19, relating to financial standing, on form PSV421 "Application for a Public Service Vehicle Operators Licence" are truthful.

Mr. Freeman: In assessing the financial standing of applicants, traffic commissioners take into account a number of factors in addition to the answers to these questions. They require evidence of financial standing in the form of audited accounts, bank reference, or a statement of income and expenditure.

The applicant must sign a declaration on the form that the statements made are true. A person who knowingly makes a false statement for the purpose of obtaining a licence is liable to a fine, and the revocation, suspension or curtailment of the licence.

Names of applicants for operator licences are published in notices and proceedings. Any chief officer of police or local authority may object to the grant of a licence on the ground that the requirements of financial standing have not been satisfied. Members of the public or other operators may also make representations from their own local knowledge about the suitability of applicants. Allegations are investigated as far as is practicable.

If there is any doubt about applicants having sufficient funds, commissioners will hold a public inquiry at which they may be assisted by a financial assessor.

North London Line

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if local passenger services on the north London line will be maintained throughout the construction period of any rail link along the north London line corridor.

Mr. Freeman: The two St. Pancras route proposals put forward in Union Railways' recent report would allow passenger services on the north London line to be maintained, although the surface route would require the sort of track possessions normally associated with a major upgrade.

Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if plans for a new Thameslink station at King's Cross or St. Pancras will be announced at the same time as the conclusion of his consideration of Union Railways' proposals for the high speed channel link.

Mr. Freeman: The Government's decisions on the channel tunnel rail link will take account of the options for Thameslink. Any simultaneous announcement about the latter would depend upon its relationship to the London terminal chosen for the rail link.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library copies of the environmental impact assessments presented to him by applicants for development of intermediate stations on the proposed channel fast link railway.

Mr. Freeman: Union Railways' specialist consultants carried out environmental appraisals of the various intermediate station options. These formed part of Union Railways' recent report and will be published when the Government's decisions are announced.

Road Pricing

Mr. Channon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what criteria will be used to decide which major new road proposals of his Department will be subject to road planning conferences along the lines of that planned for Hereford in December;

(2) if road planning conferences along the lines of that planned for Hereford in December are planned to discuss all his Department's major new road proposals.

Mr. Key: The two conferences I have announced are trials of an innovative approach to trunk road planning. If they achieve their objective of establishing local consensus

on the right way forward with road proposals I plan to use them more widely. It is too early to set definitive selection criteria.

Red Light Cameras

Mr. Livingstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many red light cameras are at prevent installed on London trunk roads for which the funding is the responsibility of his Department; and how many more are planned to be installed next year.

Mr. Norris: There are currently 34 red-light camera sites on trunk roads in London, serviced by five cameras. A programme to establish further sites next year has not yet been finalised.

Trans-Pennine Study

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) on what date the public consultation period on the trans-Pennine study report ended; and how many representations were received;

(2) if he will make available copies of the written representations he has received on the trans-Pennine study report.

Mr. Key: The consultation period on the trans-Pennine study strategy report ended on 16 April. Some 244 representations were received. It is not general practice to make available copies of written representations made to the Department in response to consultation exercises.

Taxis

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will visit Birmingham to discuss his proposals on the deregulation of taxis and minicabs with representatives from the industry there.

Mr. Norris: I hope that representatives of the taxi and private hire vehicle industry in Birmingham, and throughout England and Wales, will study the consultation paper carefully, and let me have their views by 1 March. I and my officials will be happy to meet industry representatives if that would be helpful, subject to diary commitments.

Trunk Roads Programme

Sir Geoffrey Pattie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria are being used to establish the priorities between different schemes within the trunk roads programme.

Mr. Key: Priorities for schemes in the trunk road programme are based on the Department's objectives for roads expenditure, which cover road safety, environmental impact and economic benefits. Funding and management constraints also affect the priority given to schemes.

Gatwick Airport (Second Runway)

Mr. Kenneth Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what is his policy on the legal agreement between the British Airports Authority and West Sussex county council on a second runway at Gatwick; what plans he has to introduce legislation in respect of the construction of a second runway at Gatwick; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what representations he has received from the chief executive of BAA plc and West Sussex county council regarding the construction of a second runway at Gatwick.

Mr. Norris: I will write to my right hon. Friend.

Mr. Kenneth Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will publish in the *Official Report* the extracts from the legal agreement between the British Airports Authority and West Sussex county council which rule out a second runway at Gatwick;

(2) if he will publish in the *Official Report* the extracts from the legal agreement between the British Airports Authority and West Sussex county council which rule out the use of the existing emergency runway at Gatwick airport except when the main runway is closed.

Mr. Norris *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* The legal agreement between BAA and West Sussex county council regarding a second runway at Gatwick and use of the emergency runway is a matter for the parties concerned. The agreement is publicly available from the county secretary of West Sussex county council.

Bus Deregulation

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he will visit Shannon road in the Birmingham, Selly Oak constituency to explain his policies on bus deregulation to residents there.

Mr. Freeman: No, but I invite the hon. Member to write to me about the matter.

Highways Agency

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many applicants for the post of chief executive of the Highways Agency have been received.

Mr. David Davis: I have been asked to reply.

It has not been the practice of the Civil Service Commissioners to give details of a competition while it is in progress. Any relevant information is published in their annual report. In general, the size of applicant fields varies greatly and is not necessarily a good guide to the number of well-qualified applicants.

DEFENCE

Ministerial Speech

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the speech by the Minister for Defence Procurement made at the Royal United Services Institute on 27 October.

Mr. Aitken: I will do so as soon as a suitable transcript is available.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Devlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many buildings his Department occupies in London; and how many administrative staff his Department employs in offices in London.

Mr. Aitken: Excluding military sites and other buildings of the defence estate, my Department occupies 22 buildings in London.

On 1 October 1993 there were some 9,300 full and part-time MOD non-industrial civil servants working in the inner-London pay area.

Eastney and Peninsula Barracks

Mr. Faulds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what professional fees have arisen in payments to architects, surveyors, planning consultants, estate agents and any others in the course of his Department obtaining planning permission for and in marketing the sale of *(a)* part of the Eastney barracks in Portsmouth and *(b)* part of the Peninsula barracks in Winchester.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested is commercial-in-confidence.

Soldiers (Misdemeanours)

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will discontinue the investigation of alleged misdemeanours by United Kingdom soldiers in the Falklands conflict.

Mr. Hanley: My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence referred the allegations to the Crown Prosecution Service in August 1992 who asked the Metropolitan police to undertake an investigation which is in progress. The extent and nature of that investigation are operational matters for the Commissioner in which Ministers cannot intervene.

Pindar Accommodation

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the amount by which the cost of Pindar accommodation exceeded the original estimate; how much of this was the consequence of civil engineering problems; and who was the contractor.

Mr. Hanley: The estimated cost of the Pindar civil works programme against the fully endorsed operational requirement in 1989 was £42,500,000. The actual cost was £66,000,000 giving an excess over the original estimate of £23,500,000.

The reasons for the cost increase were inherent technical difficulty of converting the existing deep underground site with the restricted access and the difficulty of estimating the costs for such an unprecedented programme.

The prime contractor was Balfour Kilpatrick.

Mr. Mohammed Hashemi

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he or his officials last met Mr. Mohammed Hashemi.

Mr. Aitken: I have no knowledge of any such meetings.

Wartime Command Centre

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 29 October, *Official Report*, column *728*, if he will identify *(a)* the contractors involved in building the wartime command centre, *(b)* how much each contractor was paid and *(c)* what sum was specified in the original contract.

Mr. Hanley: I will write to the hon. Member.

Aldermaston

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 1 November 1993, *Official Report*, column *64*, what is the expected *(a)* completion date and *(b)* cost of the contract with NNC Ltd. for Aldermaston.

Mr. Aitken: The expected completion date of the contract is April 1996. The costs concerned are commercially confidential.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 1 November 1993, *Official Report*, column *65*, when the sludge solidification plant at Aldermaston is expected to be operational.

Mr. Aitken: We expect the plant to be fully operational in 1997.

Scott Inquiry

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many specific documents his Department has been asked to provide to Lord Justice Scott's inquiry into military sales to Iraq since he provided the documents in bulk at the outset of the inquiry; and if he will list by title of documents provided to or requested by, Lord Justice Scott since September.

Mr. Aitken: Lord Justice Scott's inquiry has requested a wide range of documents from my Department. It would be inappropriate for me to comment in detail on the number and nature of these requests, which are matters between my Department and Lord Justice Scott's inquiry.

Gulf War

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a transcript of the interview given by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, on injuries to service men in the Gulf war to "Critical Eye", broadcast on Channel 4 on 28 October.

Mr. Hanley: When I agreed to give the interview it was on the basis that the whole interview would be used. What I will place in the Library therefore will be a transcript of the whole interview with the brief extract the programme makers actually used highlighted.

Ministerial Meeting

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on matters discussed and decisions taken at the meeting with his French counterpart on 25 October.

Mr. Aitken: My right hon. and learned Friend and his French counterpart, M. Leotard, discussed a range of issues including Bosnia and the common new generation frigate. A statement welcoming progress on the frigate was signed by the two Ministers.

SCOTLAND

Prison Ships

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what negotiations his Department is holding with any third party for the purchase of a prison ship; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what steps his Department has taken to commission the construction of a prison ship or negotiate with a third party for the commissioning of the construction of a prison ship; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The Scottish prison service has not been involved in any such negotiations; nor does it have any plans to acquire accommodation of this sort.

Murder

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many cases of murder have *(a)* been brought and *(b)* been successfully prosecuted in the last 10 years in Scottish courts where a victim has died more than 366 days after the offence had taken place.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The period of 366 days is of no particular significance in Scotland and no such statistics are kept. There have, however, been cases in which a victim has survived for a number of months before succumbing to injuries sustained in an attack. Although problems of causation might arise, there is in principle no reason in Scotland why a prosecution for murder should not follow even after a year and a day.

Local Government Reorganisation

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what are the estimated costs, in the first year, of his proposed re-organisation of Scottish local government; what is the resultant average cost per council tax payer in Scotland; and if he will explain how these figures are arrived at.

Mr. Stewart: The Government's White Paper "Shaping the Future—The New Councils" estimated that transitional costs in the range £120 million to £196 million will be incurred over 15 years, but that these will be quickly offset by ongoing savings of between £21 million and £65 million per year. The precise level of costs and savings incurred in the first year of reorganisation will depend on decisions yet to be taken by the new councils. The funding of these costs will be the subject of consultation with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities in the normal way and it is not therefore possible or sensible or meaningful to estimate their effects upon council tax levels at this stage. Recent speculation about the effects of reorganisation on council tax levels has therefore been entirely without substance. The savings arising from the new local government structure should give rise to significant reductions for council tax payers.

Toxic Waste

Mr. Graham: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many licensed incinerators there are in Scotland to deal with toxic waste; and if he will list them.

Sir Hector Monro: Incinerators for waste disposal are subject to control under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The enforcing authorities in Scotland are the chief inspector, Her Majesty's industrial pollution inspectorate or the district or islands council in whose area the plant is situated.

Authorisation in respect of incineration processes has been granted by the chief inspector in relation to the facilities in part A of the table. The facilities in part B are those for which an application has been made, but has yet to be determined.

Part A

Glaxochem Ltd., Annan
Glaxochem Ltd., Montrose
Nobel's Explosives Ltd., Stevenson
City of Aberdeen District Council, Aberdeen
Blagden Packaging Ltd., Paisley
Caird Environmental Ltd., Renfrew
City of Dundee District Council, Dundee
Clackmannan District Council, Alloa
Orkney Islands Council, Kirkwall

Part B

Shetland Islands Council, Lerwick
Renfrew District Council, Linwood
Her Majesty's Naval Base, Rosyth
Exxon Chemical Olefin Inc., Mossmorran

Information about facilities subject to local authority control is not held centrally.

Suicide

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many suicides were reported of patients receiving *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* out-patient psychiatric care in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Urology Services, Ayrshire

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the recent award of a contract for urology services by Ayrshire and Arran health board to the South Ayrshire Trust; and what was the involvement of the Scottish Office in repeating the tendering process.

Mr. Stewart: The NHS Management Executive was concerned that the initial bids were not submitted on a comparable basis. Therefore, the health board was asked to review the tender specification and invite revised bids.

The subsequent decision to award the contract for urology services to South Ayrshire NHS Trust was taken by the board and did not require further reference to the NHS Management Executive.

Arable Crops

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what considerations underlay the decision to include forage hectares of cereals which are not claimed for under the arable aid claims scheme in the total for arable crops claimed against base areas.

Sir Hector Monro: The inclusion of forage hectares of cereals in the total for arable crops claimed against the base area is a legal requirement under article 2 of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1765/92, the regulation governing the administration of the arable area payments scheme. The regulation applies throughout the European Community.

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if cereals for which arable aid was not claimed were excluded from the figure for main scheme arable aid claims.

Sir Hector Monro: It is a legal requirement under the relevant EC regulations that cereals entered as forage in the

annual statement submitted under the integrated administration and control system must be included in the total of arable crops claimed against the base area. I refer the hon. Member to my earlier reply of today. However, if an area of cereals formed neither part of an arable claim nor a forage area, I can confirm that such an area would not be included in the total of arable aid claims.

Land Ownership

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what percentage of the acreage of Scotland is in foreign ownership;

(2) what percentage of the foreign ownership of the acreage of Scotland is registered in offshore banking centres.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: No specific record is maintained of the nationality of the owners of land in Scotland.

Dounreay

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what communications he has received from the Edlow Group on research reactor operators in regard to extending the contract with AEA Technology at Dounreay for treatment of research reactor fuel.

Sir Hector Monro: I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as possible and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Consultants

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what was the cost of the consultants' merit award system in 1990-91 in Scotland.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Hospitals (Competitive Tendering)

Ms Rachel Squire: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Tayside health board, including the successful tenderer and the value of contract;

(2) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Lothian health board including successful tenderer and value of contract;

(3) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Western Isles health board, including successful tenderer and value of contract;

(4) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Shetland health board, including the successful tenderer and value of contract;

(5) if he will list the contracts for hospital and health services awarded so far under the competitive tendering process by Orkney health board including successful tenderer and value of contract.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as possible, and place a copy of the signed letter in the Library of the House.

Local Enterprise Companies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether the local enterprise companies, or their members are subject to *(a)* investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner, *(b)* scrutiny by the Audit Commission or the National Audit Office, *(c)* the statutory provisions for local government which apply to local authorities, *(d)* performance indicators and *(e)* monitoring officers with statutory duties for probity and finance.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Energy and Environmental Technologies

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on progress made to date by the Scottish Development Agency's energy and environmental technologies programme.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as possible and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Timber Frame Fabrication

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he hopes to complete his consideration of changes to the current building standard in relation to timber frame fabrication; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The Scottish Office building directorate is currently considering more than 100 detailed responses to proposals for amending the fire provisions in the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations. My right hon. Friend and I are well aware of the interest shown in these proposals by the Scottish timber frame industry and its views are being given very careful consideration along with all the other representations received. The current timetable envisages laying amendments before Parliament next summer to come into force by the end of the year.

Hospital Waiting Lists

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish a table showing the number of people awaiting hospital treatment in each Scottish health board area in *(a)* March 1990, *(b)* March 1992, *(c)* June 1993 and *(d)* September 1993.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

HEALTH

Consultancy Costs

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was *(a)* the total price for each contract and the number of patients to be treated and *(b)* the average cost per consultant episode for district health authority providers outside London and within London for the latest period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: Information on the total price of contracts is not available centrally. The average cost per

consultant episode is available in the published annual accounts of all national health service providers, both trusts and units directly managed by district health authorities. The cost given by specialty consists only of direct patient care costs and excludes hospital overheads. It therefore cannot be compared directly with contract prices, which include overheads. The hon. Member may wish to contact the chairmen of regional health authorities for further information.

Child Neglect

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what response she has made to the UNICEF report on child neglect in rich nations, a copy of which has been sent to her.

Mr. Bowis: None. The report "Child neglect in rich nations" was not sent by UNICEF to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

Perioperative Deaths

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence she has of the complication rates in terms of morbidity and mortality of surgeons who are more specialised and have high operative activity rates.

Mr. Sackville: Detailed information is not available centrally. The medical profession holds the view, supported by a number of studies, that patients receive higher standards of treatment when referred to surgeons who have developed specialised expertise and treat high volumes of patients.

GP Fund Holders

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what are the practice prescribing costs per practice as national averages for fund holder and non-fund holder general practitioners.

Dr. Mawhinney: The prescribing costs—net ingredient cost—per practice for fund holders in England in 1992-93 was £614,314 and the figure for non-fund holders was £298,718 per practice. There is no valid comparison because fund-holding practices which are generally larger than non-fund-holding practices therefore incur higher prescribing costs. The average prescribing expenditure—net ingredient cost—per patient in 1992-93 was £56·08 for fund-holding practices and £60·39 for non-fund-holding practices.

Generic Prescribing

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what cost analysis she has of saving to the national health service by introducing generic prescribing.

Dr. Mawhinney: No reliable estimate of savings can be made from the current rate of generic prescribing as it is not possible to determine which brand name products might have been prescribed as alternatives.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the highest generic prescribing rate by any general practitioner in the United Kingdom; and what is the national average generic prescribing rate by general practitioners and the savings to the NHS in real terms for each percentage point increase in generic prescribing.

Dr. Mawhinney: Information on generic prescribing rates at general practitioner level is not available centrally. The national average generic prescribing rate by general practitioners for the year 1992-93, in England, was 44 per cent. It is not possible to provide a meaningful estimate of the savings to the national health service in real terms for each percentage point increase in the level of generic prescribing.

Notes:

1. Based on figures provided by the Prescription Pricing Authority through the PACTLINE Management Services Information System.
2. Relates to GP prescribing only.
3. Based on the 1992-93 financial year.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the percentage generic prescribing for fund holder and non-fund holder general practitioners.

Dr. Mawhinney: The percentage of generic prescribing for general practitioners in England for the year 1992-93 was 49 per cent. for fund holders and 43 per cent. for non-fundholders.

Notes:

1. Based on figures provided by the Prescription Pricing Authority through the PACTLINE Management Services Information System.
2. Relates to GP prescribing only.
3. Based on the 1992-93 financial year.

Ms. Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to introduce generic substitution into prescribing.

Dr. Mawhinney: It is Government policy to encourage general practitioners to prescribe generically wherever clinically appropriate. During the period 1982 to 1992 generic prescribing almost doubled to 43 per cent. National health service managers are working with GP practices at local level to achieve the highest possible levels of generic prescribing through training, increased GP fund holding and incentive schemes.

Tower Hamlets

Ms Gordon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what was the percentage ethnic breakdown by enumeration district in Tower Hamlets from the 1991 census returns;

(2) what were the percentages of *(a)* men aged 65 and over and *(b)* women aged 60 and over in each enumeration district within Tower Hamlets from the 1991 census returns.

Mr. Sackville: This information will be placed in the Library.

Pacemakers

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who was responsible for warning hospitals of faults in pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93 manufactured by Siemens.

Mr. Sackville: The manufacturer has a responsibility to advise users and purchasers when faults in their products become apparent. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, via the medical devices directorate, issues safety warnings in circumstances where there is a risk to patient safety from device faults.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what monitoring has been done of the recall of patients fitted with pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93.

Mr. Sackville: Following the issue of safety warnings it is for the clinician concerned to judge what action should be taken in respect of each patient.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when hospitals were warned of a fault in pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93 manufactured by Siemens.

Mr. Sackville: Hospitals were warned of a fault in pacemaker lead models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype T93 by a medical advisory issued by Siemens on 4 February 1993, copies of which will be placed in the Library.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which hospitals were warned of faults in pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health issued a safety warning "Pacemaker Technical Note No. 48" concerning the faults in Siemens pacemaker lead models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype T93 to all hospitals carrying out pacing and pacing follow-up in the United Kingdom. Copies of the safety warning are available in the Library.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in *(a)* Lewisham, *(b)* London and *(c)* nationwide have been recalled as a result of the fault in pacemaker models 1010T, 1050T and Prototype 93.

Mr. Sackville: In February 1993, the Department of Health issued advice to all United Kingdom pacing and follow-up centres that all affected devices should be evaluated as soon as possible and at least within six months. Details of the number of patients seen as a result of this advice is not available centrally. Copies of the advice are available in the Library.

Mental Health Patients

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will bring forward proposals to introduce a statutory requirement on all health authorities to provide a care programme, including a key worker, for all patients discharged from mental hospitals.

Mr. Bowis: We have no plans to do so.

Health Authority Funding

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets have been issued to regional health authorities to complete the move to capitation formula funding under the citizens charter.

Dr. Mawhinney: The weighted capitation funding policy was announced in the White Paper "Working for Patients", Cm 555, January 1989, paragraph 4.12.

We have made considerable progress in moving regional health authorities towards their weighted capitation shares, and in 1993-94 the position of RHA's allocations relative to weighted capitation shares is as shown in the table:

RHA (1993-94)	*Percent.*
Northern	99·46
Yorkshire	99·77
Trent	99·36
East Anglia	99·34
North West Thames	102·03
North East Thames	101·15
South East Thames	100·30
South West Thames	101·16
Wessex	99·08
Oxford	99·60
South Western	99·35
West Midlands	99·49
Mersey	99·85
North Western	99·74

Myopia

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many NHS trust hospitals in *(a)* west Yorkshire and *(b)* throughout the United Kingdom are treating patients for myopia under the NHS;

(2) how many people are waiting for treatment for myopia.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received about the charges being made to people applying for treatment for myopia; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: We have received a number of representations from hon. Members and their constituents. These have been largely concerned with the charges made by the private sector for laser radial keratotomy and the possibility of such treatment becoming available within the national health service.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research is being undertaken by her Department into the use of lasers to offer treatment under the NHS to myopia suffers; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 23 June 1993 at columns *177-78.*

Mental Health Patients

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what basic standards have been set under the citizens charter for rights for mental health patients to adequate care and staffing levels.

Mr. Bowis: All the patients charter rights and standards apply to all those who use the national health service. In particular, the charter standard No. 2 sets out that

". . . health authorities should ensure that the services they arrange can be used by everyone, including people with special needs such as those with mental disabilities . . ."

Proposed Hospital, Liverpool

Mr. Loyden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what is the nature of the contracts with SAS Service Partner, Compass and other companies involved in the planned patient hotel on the site of the Royal Liverpool

university hospital; when the contracts will commence; and what comparison she has made between the proposals and those made in 1990 in connection with the same site;

(2) what is the status of the document "Making a Difference to Patient Care-Proposed Short Stay Facility at the Liverpool Royal University Hospital"; and to what consultative procedures its proposals will be subject;

(3) what proportion of the staff employed at the proposed patient hotel on the site of the Royal Liverpool university hospital will be qualified nursing or medical staff; what qualifications the stewards and stewardesses will have; and what company will control the staff;

(4) if she will make a statement on the proposals for management and staffing in paragraph 5 of the proposal for a short-stay facility at the Royal Liverpool university hospital.

Mr. Sackville: The information requested by the hon. Member is not available centrally and he may wish to contact the trust chairman, Mr. J. Fitzpatrick, for details.

We understand the proposed short-stay, low dependency facility at the Royal Liverpool university hospital national health service trust will provide more appropriate care to low-dependency patients, improving their mobility and choice while providing a more cost-effective service.

Community Care Ombudsman

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will bring forward proposals to introduce a community care ombudsman.

Mr. Bowis: Services provided under the new community care arrangements are already covered by the existing local government ombudsman and the health service commissioner.

Thames Region Staff

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the total number of *(a)* hospital nurses, *(b)* midwives, *(c)* health visitors and *(d)* district nurses for each Thames region for each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Racism

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to counteract racism in the NHS.

Dr. Mawhinney: We are fully committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the national health service both for patients and for staff. We shall shortly be launching a programme of action on employment opportunities in the NHS for our ethnic minority staff and we are also setting up an ethnic health unit to address the ethnic minority community's need for equal access to provision of health services.

Prescriptions

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many items are prescribed in multi-pack or course treatments and charged at the rate of two or more prescription items.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available. A prescription charge is payable in respect of each quantity of a drug or appliance dispensed, unless the patient is entitled to charge exemption or remission. The fact that two or more separate preparations may be dispensed together does not alter the patient's liability for prescription charges. Examples of items for which more than one charge is payable are contained in part XVI of "Drug Tariff", copies of which are available in the Library.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she has on the number or percentage of prescriptions that are undispensed.

Dr. Mawhinney: None.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of prescriptions cost the NHS less than *(a)* £5·00, *(b)* £5·25 and *(c)* £5·50.

Dr. Mawhinney: Based on the net ingredient cost of prescriptions dispensed in 1992 the percentages costing less than £5, £5·25 and £5·50 were 61·6 per cent., 64·1 per cent. and 65·6 per cent. respectively.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the average expenditure on prescription charges by a person who is not exempt from such charges in the last year.

Dr. Mawhinney: About £10 in 1992-93.

Pharmacies, Lancashire

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pharmacies there are in Lancashire; and what representations she has received as to the viability of such pharmacies arising from the new payment formula.

Dr. Mawhinney: There were 301 pharmacies in Lancashire on 30 September 1993. Since April 1993, the Department has received a number of representations about community pharmacies, 13 of which have been from hon. Members and other interests in Lancashire.

GP Fund Holders

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the percentage of general practitioner fund holders over budget in 1991-92 and 1992-93.

Dr. Mawhinney: Information about individual general practitioner fund holder over or underspends is not held centrally. Regional health authorities are responsible for managing fund holder spending within overall cash limits.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the quality achievements that general practitioner fund holders have achieved as a result of their status.

Dr. Mawhinney: Fund holders have been at the forefront of achieving quality improvements for patients, for example, shorter waiting times; more convenient services in general practitioner surgeries such as physiotherapy and outpatient clinics; by providing a wider range of services themselves such as minor operations; and by speeding up diagnostic tests and discharge arrangements. In many areas hospitals have implemented these improvements for all patients.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence she has on the practice of fund-holding

general practitioners in the extent to which they refer patients to specialists, including those visiting general practices.

Dr. Mawhinney: There are now over 1,200 fund-holding practices in England and it would not be practicable to hold referral information about them all centrally. However, regions report that fund holders are improving services for patients locally in a variety of ways including providing a wider range of services themselves and contracting for hospital clinicians to hold out-patient clinics in their surgeries.

NHS Trusts

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the guidance issued on the salary of chief executives of NHS trusts.

Dr. Mawhinney: Guidance on determining rates of pay for executives in national health service trusts was set out in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's letter of 22 January 1991 to all NHS trust chairmen. That is the standing advice and copies have been placed in the Library. The chief executive of the NHS Management Executive also wrote to chairmen of all third wave trusts on 20 January 1993 explaining how the 1992 public sector pay restraint affected executive pay appointments at that time. Copies of that letter have also been placed in the Library.

Terminal Illness

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* terminal cases and *(b)* hospice beds there were in each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: Information on the number of terminal cases is not available. The number of hospice in-patient beds in each of the last five years in England is shown in the table.

Year[1]	*Number of hospice beds (in-patient) England*
1989	1,863
1990	2,093
1991	2,171
1992	2,321
1993	2,409

[1] Figures collected in January of each year.
Source: St. Christopher's Hospice Information Service.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospice beds for children there were in each of the last five years.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Pharmacy Sales to Children

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the operation of rules and regulations in relation to the sale of *(a)* condoms and *(b)* medicines in pharmacies to children.

Dr. Mawhinney: There are no legislative restrictions on the sale of condoms.

There are no regulations covering the sale of medicines to children outside the general controls imposed by part III of the Medicines Act 1968. However, the code of ethics of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, which governs the conduct of all pharmacists, states that

"a pharmacist must not supply any medicinal product to a child, unless satisfied that the product will be used safely. Where the supply is for another person, the pharmacist must take steps to ensure that the product will be delivered safely to an adult and that appropriate information will be conveyed to the patient or the responsible adult."

Sellafield (Radioactive Discharges)

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will request COMARE to review the National Radiological Protection Board report on "Collective Doses from Proposed Sellafield Discharges".

Mr. Sackville: The Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment has seen and welcomed this report.

Tuberculosis

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plan she has to include the BCG vaccination in the target for general practitioners.

Mr. Sackville: BCG vaccination is recommended for schoolchildren aged between 10 and 13 years. The majority of such vaccinations are given in schools as part of the school health service. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to include the BCG vaccination in the target scheme for general practitioners.

Consultants' Pay

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to convert the consultant merit award system to performance-related pay.

Dr. Mawhinney: The scheme is kept constantly under review and we would consider carefully any possible interaction between the scheme and any proposals made for the extension of performance pay throughout the national health service.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the cost of the consultants' merit award system in 1990-91 in England.

Dr. Mawhinney: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 27 October 1993 at column *694*.

Public Attendance at Meetings

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish a table showing for (i) regional health authorities, (ii) district health authorities, (iii) family health service authorities and (iv) NHS trusts, whether the public has a statutory right to attend all board or committee meetings, and to inspect *(a)* the minutes of meetings, *(b)* the annual reports and *(c)* the annual accounts.

Dr. Mawhinney: The meetings of regional health authorities, district health authorities and family health services authorities are governed by the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. This requires any full meeting of the authority, at which approval for a specific action is required, to be open to the public. The public may be excluded from the whole or part of a meeting when confidential business is to be discussed.

National health service trusts are required to have one public meeting per year, in accordance with the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, but many more meetings are open than they are legally required to be.

NHS trusts are required to publish annual reports, business plans and accounts. Regional health authorities, district health authorities and family health services authorities are not required to do so, but most publish annual reports, and their audited accounts are publicly available on request.

Cancer Specialists

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cancer specialists there are per head of population in each EC country.

Dr. Mawhinney: Information for England is shown in the table. Information relating to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are matters for my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Wales and Scotland and my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Equivalent information for other EC countries is not available.

Numbers of cancer specialists per million population
England—30 September 1992

	Medical oncology	*Clinical oncology*
Consultants	47	220
All staff[1]	96	365
Consultants per million population	1·0	4·6
All staff per million population	2·0	7·6

[1] Grades included are consultants, staff grades, associate specialists, senior registrars and registrars.

Professors of General Practice

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the London teaching hospitals that have professors of general practice.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

Zemaphyte

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to enable Zemaphyte to be prescribable on an NHS prescription.

Dr. Mawhinney: Zemaphyte was added to the list of products which cannot be supplied on national health service prescriptions on 1 November 1993. There are no plans to change this decision.

Hospital Closures

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list for each region *(a)* named hospital closures from May 1979 to July 1993 and *(b)* the number and type of beds closed.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the hospitals in London closed each year since 1989.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the hospitals closed in each of the last 10 years; and how much capital was generated from each sale.

Mr. Sackville: Detailed information is not available centrally. However, in the last 10 years £1,500 million has been generated by health authorities from the sales of surplus land and property. This money has been reinvested in hospital building contributing to the largest capital programme in the history of the national health service.

Private Health Insurance

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to move the health service to a more private insurance-based system.

Mr. Sackville: None.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she has investigated the possibility of fund-holding general practitioners selling private health insurance in the future.

Dr. Mawhinney: No.

Breast Cancer

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the average waiting time for mastectomy in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement on the waiting time between diagnosis of breast cancer and surgery.

Dr. Mawhinney: Information requested on waiting times for mastectomies is not available centrally.

We are aware that the period between diagnosis of breast cancer and surgery is a worrying time for women. The national health service breast screening programme, endorsed by the Breast Cancer Screening Advisory Committee, suggests the following targets for the follow-up of abnormalities:

- first stage screening to subsequent assessment: less than two weeks;
- surgical assessment: less than one week;
- completion of assessment to biopsy: 90 per cent. admitted within two weeks;
- diagnosis to treatment of screen detected lesions: 90 per cent. admitted within three weeks.

Fuel Costs

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) of 30 March 1993, *Official Report*, column *189*, whether she has now assessed the effect of increases in the price of fuel on the health of the elderly.

Mr. Bowis: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security has announced that poorer pensioners and others on a low income will receive extra financial help before value added tax appears in their fuel bills.

Hospitals (Hotel Charges)

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has investigated the possibility of hotel charges.

Mr. Sackville: We have made clear that we have no plans to introduce hotel charges for national health service patients. Patients will continue to be treated on the basis of their clincal need, regardless of ability to pay.

Fertility Treatment

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to publish guidelines on eligibility for fertility treatment.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South (Mr. Marshall) on 27 May 1993 at column *670*.

Health Service Demand

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimates she has made of the cost of the increase in demand in health services in the coming years.

Mr. Sackville: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will announce the Government's spending plans for 1994-95 to 1996-97 in his Budget statement on 30 November.

Unhealthy Footwear

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimates she has made of morbidity related to the wearing of unhealthy footwear.

Mr. Sackville: None.

Morning-after Pill

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions for the emergency pill have been given in each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: As there is only one product under this category of drug, the data requested are commercially confidential to the manufacturer and cannot be disclosed.

Family Planning

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to encourage general practitioners to develop family planning services for men.

Mr. Sackville: Under their terms of service general practitioners are required to provide patients with all the services they need including, where appropriate, family planning advice. One of the objectives set in the Government's "Health of the Nation" White Paper is to ensure the provision of the full range of family planning services for men and women who want to use them.

Cancer

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the training of doctors and medical students on cancer.

Dr. Mawhinney: Our aim is to ensure that patients receive high quality treatment from properly trained doctors. Cancer is a major cause of mortality and morbidity. The diagnosis and treatment of the many forms of cancer figure prominently at all stages of the education and training of our doctors, and will continue to do so.

National Treatment Protocols

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plan she has to develop national treatment protocols.

Mr. Sackville: The National Health Service Management Executive is considering ways of working closely with national clinical professional bodies to develop and provide guidelines of good practice.

Patient Confidentiality

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to investigate breaches of patient confidentiality by district health authorities and family health services authorities.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Foreign Patients

Mrs. Ray Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients are being treated in NHS trust hospitals are from countries outwith the EC; what are the funding arrangements for these patients; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally. The National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989 require overseas visitors to pay for NHS treatment unless they fall within certain exempt categories including people with communicable diseases and people from countries with which the United Kingdom has reciprocal health agreements.

GPs' Pay

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to review the geographical inequalities in average net remuneration of general practitioners.

Dr. Mawhinney: We continue to keep the operation of the remuneration system under review, in consultation with the profession.

NHS Trust Employees (Infectious Diseases)

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health through which body payment for the treatment and care of a national health service trust employee who contracts an infectious disease through the course of his or her work should be made; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: I will write to the hon. Member.

NHS Charges

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what categories of person are exempted from charges for national health service sight tests; and how much would be saved by removing the exemption from charges for each one of those categories;

(2) what categories of person are exempted from charges for national health service dental examinations; and how much would be saved by removing the exemption from charges for each one of those categories;

(3) what categories of person are exempted from charges for national health service prescriptions; and how much would be saved by removing the exemption from charges for each of those categories;

(4) what proportion of people receiving *(a)* national health service sight tests, *(b)* national health service dental examinations and *(c)* national health service prescriptions are exempted from charges;

(5) what was the number of national health service dental examinations paid for by the national health service for each six-monthly period since October 1990;

(6) how much additional revenue would be raised by increasing the standard charge for national health service prescriptions to *(a)* £4·50, *(b)* £4·75 and *(c)* £5;

(7) what are the latest figures for estimated annual income from national health service sight test charges;

(8) how much extra revenue would be raised by increasing the standard charge for national health service sight tests by *(a)* 5 per cent., *(b)* 10 per cent. and *(c)* 20 per cent;

(9) how much extra revenue would be raised by increasing the standard charge for national health service dental examinations by *(a)* 5 per cent., *(b)* 10 per cent. and *(c)* 20 per cent;

(10) what would be the total saving to the Exchequer from changing the exemption criteria for NHS prescription charges to those currently applied to NHS sight test charges.

Dr. Mawhinney: I will write to the hon. Member.

Psychiatric Hospitals (Closures)

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been saved in each of the past 10 financial years through the closure of psychiatric hospitals.

Mr. Bowis: I will write to the hon. Member.

NHS Finance

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will provide total outturn figures, covering NHS review expenditure, for hospital and community health services revenue, HCHS capital, family health services and centrally funded services/Department of Health administration for *(a)* 1991-92 and *(b)* 1992-93, and the estimated total outturn to date for those categories for 1993-94.

Dr. Mawhinney: I will write to the hon. Member.

Pay Review Bodies

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the future of the pay review bodies.

Dr. Mawhinney: I will write to the hon. Member.

Speech Therapy

Ms Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the amount of expenditure on language and speech therapy as a percentage of the total NHS budget.

Mr. Bowis: I will write to the hon. Member.

Influenza Vaccines

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement about the causes for the shortage of influenza vaccines.

Mr. Sackville: As a result of production difficulties, one manufacturer is unable to supply its product this year. However, other manufacturers have increased production so that at least as much vaccine as was used during last year's programme will be available, although there may be some delay in delivering new orders.

The Department has issued a press release giving details of the present situation. Copies are available in the Library.

Hearing Aids

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many national health service patients attending the audiology department at the Manchester Royal Infirmary were issued last year with commercial hearing aids not available through the national health service, and purchased with national health service funds and the total amount of money paid by patients in extra consultancy charges for this service.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the number of national health service departments of audiology that stopped issuing hearing aids before the end of the year in 1992-93 due to budgetary constraints.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Locality Commissioning

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been made available to district health authorities since 1 April 1991 to develop locality commissioning; and how much money has been spent in the same period on fund holder management allowances.

Dr. Mawhinney: District health authorities' prime task is to purchase the best possible quality, value for money services for their resident populations and should use all of their resources to this end. Over £14 million has been made available by the National Health Service Management Executive since April 1991 to support the development by district health authorities of various aspects of purchasing, including locality arrangements. The amount of money allowed for fund holder management arrangements is shown in the table.

Year	*£ million*
1991-92	14·1
1992-93	29·4

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many applications have been made *(a)* nationally and *(b)* in Stockport jointly by a fund-holding practice, a district health authority and a social services department to establish a joint locality commissioning agency for health and social care with a small geographical area; to what extent such applications on an experimental basis are consistent with national policies; and which applications have been granted.

Dr. Mawhinney: All purchasers are required to work closely together, within the existing legislative framework, in drawing up strategies and plans to secure high-quality, appropriate services for their local populations. Close liaison with local authority social services departments is a pre-requisite for effective locality commissioning.

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money will be made available to a group of

general practitioners as a management allowance if they decide to constitute a locality commissioning network as a fund-holding consortium; and how much will be made available to a district health authority to manage such a network where general practitioners decide they would prefer to constitute it through the district health authority.

Dr. Mawhinney: Each fund-holding unit is entitled to receive reimbursement of the cost of managing a fund of up to £35,000 a year. Where practices join together in a fund-holding unit to meet the list size requirements, the unit as a whole is entitled to receive up to the same £35,000 management allowance per year as a single practice fund-holding unit. Where single practice or group fund-holding units join together to pool their management arrangements each fund-holding unit remains entitled to claim up to the maximum management allowance of £35,000 per year. Disrict health authorities' main task is to purchase health care on behalf of their resident population and they are required to make the necessary arrangements to secure the best quality and value for money for patients from these resources.

Sight Tests

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many sight tests were carried out as part of NHS services each year since 1987-88 in the family health service authority areas of Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Gateshead and Northumberland, the area of the Northern regional health authority and England as a whole.

Dr. Mawhinney: The number of national health service sight tests paid for by each of the family health services authorities is shown in the table.

NHS sight tests

thousands

	1987-88	*1988-89*	*1989-90*[1]	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Northumberland	66·6	71·3	26·7	27·5	28·7	34·2
Gateshead	45·6	53·2	28·3	21·0	25·7	26·0
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	89·3	96·2	46·4	33·5	37·2	39·0
North Tyneside	39·3	40·0	19·1	15·6	18·0	21·2
South Tyneside	27·9	30·6	15·7	13·8	15·4	17·3
Northern RHA	698·0	740·4	336·8	275·6	314·7	345·9
England	11,694·8	12,492·8	5,279·8	4,153·7	4,979·4	5,527·6

[1] From 1 April 1989, NHS sight tests were restricted to certain groups in the population. The sight tests paid for in 1989-90 include some conducted prior to 1 April 1989 when sight tests were universally available. The remainder paid for in 1989-90 do not represent a full year under the new system, because of the delay in payments. The figure for 1989-90 is not, therefore, directly comparable with that for 1990-91.

Salmonella

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in how many cases of salmonella food poisoning foods containing eggs were found to be the source for each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: Information on salmonella food poisoning has been published for the last five years in the "PHLS/SVS Update on Salmonella Infection", copies of which have been placed in the Library.

Drug Deaths

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish a table showing the numbers of deaths each year from the taking of analgesics, anti-depressants, asthma drugs and therapies, cardio-vascular drugs, sedatives, stimulants, vitamins and vitamin supplements in each year from 1987.

Mr. Sackville: Information on the underlying cause of death is available in the International Classification of Diseases (9th Revision).

The table shows deaths from 1987-92 where the underlying cause was coded to accidental, self-inflicted, undetermined, whether accidental or purposeful, poisoning and adverse effect of correctly administered drugs in the broad classes of drugs, analgesics, antidepressants, agents acting primarily on the cardiovascular system, sedatives, hypnotics, tranquilisers and central nervous system/ psychostimulents. It excludes death due to homicides and the adverse effect of agents correctly administered.

In addition, a detailed table showing all substances mentioned on the death certificates assigned to accidental and other poisoning by solid or liquid substances is published by the Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys in "Series DH4: Injury and Poisoning Table 10" for each year. Copies of these are available in the Library.

	1987	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
Antiasthmatics	4	5	5	3	0	1
Cardiovascular	26	42	45	35	27	55
Antidepressants	291	326	307	328	294	346
Analgesics	693	678	654	721	754	877
Stimulants	2	2	3	1	10	10
Sedatives, hypnotics and benzodiazepine tranquilisers	340	360	285	246	246	232

More detailed information is not available centrally.

Fuel Costs

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to meet the Royal College of Midwives to discuss their concerns for pregnant women and newly born babies in the event of the imposition of VAT on fuel.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Health Services, East London

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what are the terms of reference, duties and functions, of the City and East London family and community health services; what is the source of its funding; by whom it is appointed; to whom it is accountable; what comparable bodies have been, or are planned; and if she will distinguish its role from the responsibilities of the relevant family health services authority.

Dr. Mawhinney *[holding answer 21 October 1993]:* I will write to the hon. Member.

Regional Health Authorities

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were employed in each regional health authority in *(a)* April 1992 and *(b)* October 1993 using whole time equivalents.

Dr. Mawhinney *[holding answer 27 October 1993]:* The information available is shown in the table. Separate figures for the numbers of staff employed by each regional health authority have not been routinely collected since September 1990. The figures in the table were collected in a special exercise in July 1992 and show only the numbers of whole-time equivalent staff employed in centrally managed, core functions in RHAs. These figures exclude RHA staff who work in other functions such as supplies, blood transfusion services, ambulance services and those medical consultants and registrars whose contracts are held by RHAs but who are managerially accountable to district health authorities.

	Numbers
Northern	656
Yorkshire	518
Trent	509
East Anglian	292
North West Thames	361
North East Thames	580
South East Thames	604
South West Thames	611
Wessex	331
Oxford	567
South Western	559
West Midlands	1,168
Mersey	313
North Western	785
Total	7,854

Since this exercise was conducted RHAs have been asked to reduce their core staff numbers to an average of 200 per RHA.

Midwives

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list for 1992 for each regional health authority and district health authority the number of nurses, midwives and health visitors, by clinical grade and pay grade title, as specified by the Whitley Council.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 21 October 1993]:* I will write to the hon. Member.

Sellafield

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the health detriment in terms of fatal and non-fatal cancers and genetic effects to the population of the United Kingdom, Europe and the world would result for each year of discharge from BNFL's Sellafield installation if (i) the draft HMIP authorisations were approved, (ii) technologies were introduced to remove krypton for the gaseous discharges from Sellafield and (iii) dry storage was selected as an option rather than reprocessing.

Mr. Yeo: I have been asked to reply.

I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will conduct a comparative study of the estimated health detriment, in terms of fatal and non-fatal cancers and genetic effects, to the population of the United Kingdom, Europe and the world that would result from each year of discharge from BNFL's Sellafield installation with the health detriment arising from the nuclear reprocessing plant at Cap de la Hague, France.

Mr. Yeo: I have been asked to reply.

Assessments of the radiological impact of discharges from Sellafield and Cap de la Hague have been published by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation. The 1993 report shows that discharges from the two plants have been similar through the late 1980s. As the Cap de la Hague plant differs from Sellafield in size, process and type of fuel reprocessed, a comparative study would be of no help.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what facts she has taken into account in deciding the extent to which the health detriment that may arise as a result of the proposed discharges from BNFL's Sellafield installation would be acceptable.

Mr. Yeo: I have been asked to reply.

The basic objectives set out in the White Paper "Radioactive Waste Management" Cmnd 8607 are such as to protect individual health and the environment. The use of the target for exposure from one site of 0·5 mSv coupled with a constraint of 0·3 mSv for any new plant will ensure these basic principles are met as they are for the proposed revised authorisation for BNFL Sellafield.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Tax Reliefs

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update his answer to the hon. Member for Hartlepool (Mr. Mandelson) of 8 June, 1993 *Official Report*, column *202*, on the cost of direct income tax reliefs to include estimates for 1994-95.

Mr. Dorrell: Available information on the major income tax reliefs based on projections of the survey of personal incomes and other surveys is given in the table. The projections for 1994-95 are based on statutory indexation and measures announced in the March Budget and on the conventional assumption of no further changes in the mortgage interest rate.

	Higher rate taxpayers			Basic or lower rate taxpayers		
	Cost of relief	Number of taxpayers with relief	Average income of taxpayers	Cost of relief	Number of taxpayers with relief	Average income of taxpayers with relief
	£ million	million	£	£ million	million	£
1991-92						
Mortgage interest relief	720	1·0	55,000	4,970	7·7	16,000
Employees contributions to occupational pension schemes	690	0·7	48,000	1,630	7·7	15,000
Contributions to personal pension schemes[1]	480	0·3	58,000	620	3·1	13,000
Other reliefs	420	0·5	60,000	270	2·6	14,000
1992-93						
Mortgage interest relief	690	1·1	53,000	4,140	7·8	16,000
Employees contributions to occupational pension schemes	750	0·8	48,000	1,600	7·4	16,000
Contributions to personal pension schemes[1]	490	0·4	58,000	590	3·0	13,000
Other reliefs	450	0·6	61,000	280	2·6	15,000
1993-94						
Mortgage interest relief	690	1·2	52,000	3,280	7·9	16,000
Employees contributions to occupational pension schemes	820	0·9	48,000	1,600	7·2	16,000
Contributions to personal pension schemes[1]	500	0·4	58,000	570	2·9	13,000
Other reliefs	480	0·6	61,000	270	2·4	15,000
1994-95						
Mortgage interest relief	680	1·7	49,000	2,620	7·6	17,000
Employees contributions to occupational pension schemes	950	1·1	46,000	1,590	7·0	16,000
Contributions to personal pension schemes[1]	540	0·4	57,000	580	2·9	13,000
Other reliefs	510	0·6	60,000	270	2·4	15,000

[1] Includes retirement annuity premia and free-standing additional voluntary contributions

Mortgage Tax Relief

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the answer of 25 February, *Official Report*, column 677 on mortgage tax relief giving estimates for 1994-95 and for a full year.

Mr. Dorrell: The estimated costs at 1994-95 levels of increasing or decreasing the limit for mortgage interest tax relief are shown in the table. The estimates are based on the distribution of existing mortgages and exclude behavioural effects which might result. The figures are based on the conventional assumption of no further changes in interest rates and allow for tax relief at 20 per cent. as announced in the March Budget.

Cost (yield) from increasing (decreasing) the limit on mortgage interest tax relief at 1994-95 levels

Limit on size of loan (£)	£ million
40,000	600
35,000	300
32,000	100
31,000	100
29,000	(100)
28,000	(200)
25,000	(400)
20,000	(900)

VAT (Domestic Fuel)

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the average weekly expenditure in 1993-94 and 1994-95 of *(a)* all households, *(b)* families with children, *(c)* non-retired households and *(d)* retired households, on domestic fuel, showing separately for 1994-95 the extra expenditure as a result of VAT at 8 per cent.

Sir John Cope: Estimates on expenditure in 1993-94 are in the table. Expenditure in 1994-95 will depend on what happens to fuel consumption following the introduction of VAT on fuel and on changes in fuel prices.

Average weekly household expenditure on fuel and power in 1993-94[1]

	£ per week
All households	13·40
Households with children	16·10
Non-pensioner households	14·10
Pensioner households[2]	11·10

[1] Estimates based on 1989-91 Family Expenditure Surveys uprated to 1993-94.

[2] Single benefit unit households where the head is over retirement age.

Duties

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what would be the impact on the retail prices index of a 10 per cent. increase in duties on *(a)* beer and cider, *(b)* wine, *(c)* spirits, *(d)* tobacco, *(e)* petrol, *(f)* derv and *(g)* vehicle excise duty.

Sir John Cope: The effect on the retail prices index of 10 per cent. duty increases is estimated to be:

	Per cent.
Beer and cider	+0·09
Wine	+0·06
Spirits	+0·07
Tobacco	+0·24
Petrol	+0·22
Diesel	+0·01
Vehicle excise	+0·09

These figures show the growth in the retail prices index excluding mortgate interest payments. They assume that the full increase in tax would be passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices. Where the tax falls on business, there is likely to be a further effect on the RPI which is not taken into account in these figures.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the total amount raised in excise duty on *(a)* beers, *(b)* wines and *(c)* spirits since 1 January; and what was the amount for each category in the equivalent period for each of the last five years.

Sir John Cope: Duty receipts for alcohol are generally received in the month following clearance. The table therefore shows duty receipts from February to September of each year.

Duty receipts in months February to September

£ million

	1993	*1992*	*1991*	*1990*	*1989*	*1988*
(a) Beer	[1]1,397	1,578	1,511	1,479	1,390	1,346
(b) Wines (including cider)	685	618	573	544	489	483
(c) Spirits	951	925	911	917	826	838

[1] As a result of previously announced changes in the system for the collection of beer duty which took effect on 1 June 1993, there was a delay of about 1 month in receiving duty payments. This led to a cash flow loss of some £200 million duty in July.

VAT

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the average weekly expenditure in 1993-94 and 1994-95 of *(a)* all households, *(b)* families with children, *(c)* non-retired households and *(d)* retired households on items which are currently zero-rated, excluding domestic fuel, giving figures separately for each item.

Sir John Cope: Estimates in the form requested are not available. The latest information on household expenditure, including expenditure on goods currently zero-rated for VAT, is published in the 1992 family expenditure survey.

Mr. Cash: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the proportion of the theoretical yield if VAT were imposed on magazines at 17·5 per cent. that would actually accrue to the Exchequer.

Sir John Cope: The figure published in table 9 of the publication "Tax Ready Reckoner and Tax Reliefs", which is in the House of Commons Library, shows the cost of zero rating books, newspapers and magazines to be £1·1 billion. Magazines represent approximately 20 per cent. of this figure. The proportion of this figure actually accruing to the Exchequer if VAT were imposed would depend on the behaviour of individual companies and consumers.

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the current level of VAT on books in other EC countries.

Sir John Cope: The rates of VAT applied to books in other EC countries are shown in the table.

VAT on books in other EC countries

Country	*Rate percentage*
Belgium	6
Denmark	25
France	5·5
Germany	7
Greece	[1]4 (3)
Ireland	0
Italy	4
Luxembourg	3
Netherlands	6
Portugal	[2]5 30 (4 21)
Spain	3

Note: The following rates apply generally in Corsica: 0·9 per cent., 2·1 per cent., 8 per cent. and 13 per cent.

[1] Rates in brackets apply in the Departments of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, the Dodecanese and the Cyclades, and in the islands of Thasos, the Northern Sporades, Samothrace and Sykros.

[2] The rates in brackets apply in the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores Archipelagoes. The lower rates apply to books which are considered in the legislation covering these items to be of a cultural, educational, recreational or sporting nature. The higher rates apply to books of an obscene or pornographic nature.

Source: VAT in Europe (International Bureau of Fiscal Documentation).

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how VAT could be applied to free newspapers and magazines.

Sir John Cope: "Free" newspapers and magazines are usually financed by sales of advertising and VAT already applies.

National Savings

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish a table showing changes in the number and type of national savings accounts in each of the last five years, distinguishing those deposits of under £10 in value together with total sums held in such accounts.

Mr. Nelson: The number and balances outstanding of National Savings ordinary and investment accounts at 31 December in each of the last five years are as follows:

	Ordinary account (000s)	Balance £ million	Investment account (000s)	Balance £ million
1988	15,741	1,646·6	4,300	7,733·4
1989	15,762	1,579·4	4,521	7,839·0
1990	15,758	1,494·3	4,817	8,527·1
1991	15,782	1,440·0	4,874	8,876·7
1992	15,848	1,424·2	4,884	8,917·4
1993[1]	15,901	1,443·1	4,810	8,970·3

[1] As at 30 September.

The number of deposits under £10 is not available for periods before 1992. Customer deposits for 1992 and the estimated figures for January to September 1993 are as follows:

	Deposits under £10 (000s)	Value £ million	Total deposits (000s)	Value £ million
Ordinary account				
1992	2,388	13·6	10,945	560·9
1993	[1]	[1]	7,587	488·9
Investment account				
1992	1,626	9·0	7,557	987·2
1993	[2]	[2]	4,135	908·5

[1] Minimum deposit increased to £10 from 1 February 1993.
[2] Minimum deposit increased to £20 from 1 February 1993.

Off-licences (Single Market)

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made as to the effect of the single market on sales of beers, wines and spirits from off-licence retail outlets.

Sir John Cope: There are many factors other than the single market affecting off-licence sales, in particular a trend towards the purchase of alcoholic drinks at retailers such as supermarkets, which are not covered by the off-licence category in the retail sales inquiry figures produced by the Central Statistical Office. It is therefore not possible to estimate the effects of the single market on the sales of alcohol at off-licences.

Alcohol Imports

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many officers in Customs and Excise are engaged in the enforcement of the regulations relating to the import of beers, wines and spirits from European Community countries.

Sir John Cope: Customs and Excise have 292 officers employed on single market activities. Their duties include the control of registered excise dealers and shippers and the protection of legitimate trade by verifying that goods imported from other EC countries for commercial purposes are charged with any United Kingdom duty and VAT which is payable.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many prosecutions there have been since 1 January for breaches of the law covering import of beers, wines and spirits from Community countries; and what was the value of the goods involved.

Sir John Cope: Customs and Excise have prosecuted four individuals since 1 January for breaches of the law covering the import of beers, wines and spirits from other EC countries. The total amount of revenue involved was £4,299·44. There are 108 other cases involving excise goods generally—for example, alcoholic liquors and tobacco products—for which prosecution proceedings have been instituted but not yet brought to a conclusion.

Central and Local Government Costs

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list for *(a)* central Government and *(b)* local government the (i) total wage and salary costs, (ii) total non-contributory pension costs and (iii) additional employment costs and benefit costs for each year since 1978-79, together with the gross national product and the proportion thereof in respect of each item for each year.

Mr. Nelson: The table shows the figures.

Central Government pay includes non-contributory pension costs not available separately as well as employers' contributions to national insurance and contributory pension schemes. No information is available on additional employment costs.

£ million

Year	Forces	Pay central government Civilians	Total	Local authorities	Social security benefits
1979	2,548	9,408	11,956	12,557	18,122
1980	3,047	12,307	15,354	15,549	21,813
1981	3,387	13,948	17,335	17,907	27,002
1982	3,692	14,758	18,450	19,224	31,677
1983	4,022	16,187	20,209	20,903	32,336
1984	4,282	16,750	21,032	22,295	34,350
1985	4,761	17,659	22,420	23,290	37,609
1986	5,048	18,685	23,733	25,387	40,860
1987	5,381	20,497	25,878	27,527	41,961
1988	5,696	22,109	27,805	30,200	43,056
1989	5,990	24,396	30,386	31,835	44,965
1990	6,449	26,984	33,433	34,539	48,898
1991	7,338	28,101	35,439	37,809	57,381
1992	7,908	28,732	36,640	40,181	65,525
Per cent. of GNP					
1979	1·5	5·4	6·9	7·2	10·4
1980	1·5	6·1	7·6	7·7	10·9
1981	1·6	6·3	7·9	8·1	12·3
1982	1·5	6·2	7·7	8·0	13·2
1983	1·5	6·1	7·7	7·9	12·2
1984	1·5	5·9	7·4	7·8	12·1
1985	1·5	5·7	7·2	7·5	12·1
1986	1·5	5·6	7·1	7·6	12·3
1987	1·5	5·6	7·1	7·6	11·5
1988	1·4	5·4	6·9	7·4	10·6
1989	1·3	5·5	6·8	7·2	10·1
1990	1·3	5·6	7·0	7·2	10·2
1991	1·5	5·7	7·2	7·6	11·6
1992	1·5	5·5	7·0	7·7	12·6

European Monetary Institute

Mr. Rowlands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the estimated capital cost and annual budget of the European Monetary Institute.

Mr. Nelson: Article 16 of the protocol on the statute of the European Monetary Institute annexed to the Maastricht treaty states that the council of the EMI will determine the size of its resources to ensure that the EMI has sufficient income to cover its administrative expenditure. The council of the EMI will decide these questions following establishment of the EMI on 1 January 1994.

Mr. Rowlands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his estimate of the number of staff to be employed by the European Monetary Institute; and how many of these will be found from within the existing establishment of the Community's institutions.

Mr. Nelson: This will be a matter for the council of the EMI to decide. I would expect the EMI to employ more permanent staff than the Committee of Central Bank Governors, which it will replace, as the EMI is charged with a number of additional tasks. The committee of governors has a secretariat of 35 staff and is also supported by a number of sub-committees and other groups which, in many cases at present, are serviced by staff from national central banks.

Tax Avoidance

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his estimate of the additional revenues obtained for the Treasury by the measures he has adopted to limit tax avoidance via trusts and offshore tax havens since 1991.

Mr. Dorrell: Information is not available in the form requested, but details of the estimated yields from the measures referred to in the question are given in the "Financial Statement and Budget Report" for the relevant year.

Newspapers and Magazines

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what information he has as to *(a)* the price elasticity and *(b)* the range of profitability of newspapers and magazines.

Sir John Cope: The Institute for Fiscal Studies has estimated the price elasticity for leisure goods, which include books, newspapers and magazines, to be –0·657. The Newspaper Society has different elasticities for different types of regional papers ranging from –0·3 to –0·5. The Newspaper Society suggests that regional daily papers have an average profitability of 11 per cent., and regional weeklies, 7 per cent.

Mr. Cash: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish a table showing for each EC member state *(a)* the current rate of VAT imposed on periodicals, *(b)* whether postage subsidies or a special rate for periodicals is available, *(c)* whether a newsprint subsidy

is available, *(d)* whether transport costs are subsidised and *(e)* whether overseas distribution costs are subsidised.

Sir John Cope: The current rate of VAT applied to periodicals in all EC countries as well as whether partial subsidies or special rates are available for periodicals are shown in the table. For the remaining items, *(c)*, *(d)* and *(e)*, it is not possible to obtain the information on the ground of disproportionate cost.

Country	*(a) VAT rate on periodicals per cent.*	*(b) Whether postal subsidies or special rates available*
Belgium	[1]0 6	Not known
Denmark	25	Yes
France	[5]2·1	Yes
Germany	7	Yes
Greece	[2]4 (3)	Not known
Ireland	12·5	Not known
Italy	4	Yes
Luxembourg	3	Not known
Netherlands	6	Yes
Portugal	[4]5, [3]30, ([4]4, [3]21)	Not known
Spain	3	Yes
United Kingdom	0	Yes

[1]Magazines which appear at least 50 times a year and whose aim is to educate or entertain the general public are subject to the zero rate.

[2]The rates in brackets apply in certain distant Greek Islands.

[3]Obscene and pornographic material is subject to an increased rate of 30 per cent. (21 per cent. in the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores Archipelagoes.)

[4]Providing they are considered in the legislation covering these items to oe of a cultural, educational, recreational or sporting nature. (A lower rate of 4 cent. applies in the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores Archipelagoes.)

[5]The following rates apply to Corsica: 0·9 per cent. and 2·1 per cent.

Source: (a) VAT in Europe (International Bureau of Fiscal Documentation) 1993.
(b) Periodical Publishers Association (UK) 1989.

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the net change of turnover of newsagents if VAT were introduced on newspapers and magazines.

Sir John Cope: Various trade interests, including the Multiple Newsagents Association, have provided estimates of the effect on turnover should VAT be extended to this area.

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received in favour of VAT on *(a)* national newspapers, *(b)* regional and local priced newspapers, *(c)* free newspapers and *(d)* magazines.

Sir John Cope: A small number of representations have been received in favour of ending the zero rate of VAT on books, newspapers and magazines.

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimates he has as to the proportion of weekly newspapers that would be expected to convert to free distribution if VAT were imposed.

Sir John Cope: Ministers have received various reports from the industry which predict some movement of weekly paid-for newspapers to the free sector if VAT were extended to this area.

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what are the rates of VAT on newspapers and magazines in each other OECD country.

Sir John Cope: Following is the information requested.

VAT on newspapers and magazines in each other OECD country

Country	*Newspapers*	*Magazines*
Australia	No VAT	No VAT
Austria	10 per cent.	10 per cent.
Belgium	0 per cent.[1]	0 per cent.[1]
	6 per cent.	6 per cent.
Canada	Exempt	Exempt
Denmark	0 per cent.	25 per cent.
Finland	Exempt[2]	Exempt[2]
	22 per cent.	22 per cent.
France	2·1 per cent.[3]	2·1 per cent.[3]
Germany	7 per cent.	7 per cent.
Greece	4 per cent.	4 per cent.
	(3 per cent.)[4]	(3 per cent.)[4]
Iceland	14 per cent.	14 per cent.
Ireland	12·5 per cent.	12·5 per cent.
Italy	4 per cent.	4 per cent.
Japan	3 per cent.	3 per cent.
Luxembourg	3 per cent.	3 per cent.
Netherlands	6 per cent.	6 per cent.
New Zealand	12·5 per cent.	12·5 per cent.
Norway	0 per cent.[5]	0 per cent.[5]
	22 per cent.	22 per cent.
Portugal	5 per cent.	5 per cent.
	(4 per cent.)[6]	(4 per cent.)[6]
Spain	3 per cent.	3 per cent.
Sweden	0 per cent.[7]	Exempt[7]
	25 per cent.	0 per cent.
		25 per cent.
Switzerland	No VAT	No VAT
Turkey	8 per cent.	8 per cent.
United States	No VAT	No VAT

[1] 0 per cent. applies to newspapers and magazines that appear at least 50 times a year and whose aim is to educate or entertain the public.

[2] Exemption applies to subscriptions to newspapers and magazines. This is a preliminary decision by the Finnish Government's Fiscal Committee.

[3] The following rates apply in Corsica: 0·9 per cent and 2·1 per cent.

[4] The rates in brackets applies in certain distant Greek Islands.

[5] 0 per cent. applies to:
(a) newspapers that appear at least once a week.
(b) magazines that are sold to subscribers or to members of an organisation.
(c) Magazines of a certain character (e.g. political, literary).
It applies only at the last taxable stage prior to acquisition by the consumer.

[6] The rate in brackets applied in Madeira and the Azores Archipelagos.

[7] 0 per cent. applies to newspapers and magazines published at least once a week.
Exemption applies to:
(a) staff magazines.
(b) magazines sent to members of an organisation.
(c) certain other magazines (religious, political, etc. in aim).
(d) magazines that represent disabled or incapacitated workers.
(e) quarterly foreign magazines under certain conditions.

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the total revenue from VAT charged on advertising in the various categories of newspapers and magazines.

Sir John Cope: When the zero rating of advertisements in newspapers and magazines was withdrawn in May 1985 the change was costed at £50 million. No subsequent estimate has been made.

Smaller Businesses

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Nelson review of finance for smaller businesses will be complete; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Nelson: I expect my industrial finance initiative programme of visits to business people around the country to be completed by the middle of next year.

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish the terms of reference for the Nelson review of finance for smaller businesses.

Mr. Nelson: My right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has asked me to examine current sources of funding for industry, with the aim of identifying whether there are any market imperfections or regulations that inhibit or distort the flows of finance, and, if there are, to consider how present arrangements can be improved.

There are no formal terms of reference for the industrial finance initiative, but it will look at the strategic role that financing plays and examine the scope for new approaches. In particular, I will be examining the financing of small to medium-sized enterprises. The intention is to improve the financial climate for business and to inform the consideration of public policies that bear on the provision of finance for industry.

Fraud

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer of 25 October, *Official Report,* column *422,* if he will take steps to obtain an estimate of the percentage of fraud involving transactions between the United Kingdom and offshore tax havens.

Mr. Dorrell: There are no steps that can be taken to obtain a reliable estimate.

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what studies his Department has conducted to identify the effects on United Kingdom national income, in real terms, of the signing of the GATT treaty as currently envisaged.

Mr. Nelson: The World Bank/OECD recently published a study which estimated that the gain to world real income resulting from a successful GATT round could be just over $200 billion—1992 prices—by the year 2002. Within this, the EC was estimated to get a very substantial gain of around $80 billion.

These figures may well underestimate the full benefit as the study does not take account of the removal of non-tariff barriers, liberalisation of trade in services or dynamic and confidence gains from a successful conclusion to the round. Nor does it take account of the adverse impact on national incomes that would arise if failure of the round resulted in a deterioration in the world trading environment.

Civil Servants

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what rules his Department operates in regard to civil servants having interests in private sector companies.

Mr. Nelson: I regret that it has not been possible to provide a substantive answer before prorogation. I shall write to the hon. Member shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

VAT (Air Fares)

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his estimate of the loss of traffic on routes between Scotland and London which would follow the imposition of value-added tax at 17·5 per cent. on air fares; if he will outline the increase in fares which will result from the imposition of VAT; and on what basis these figures were arrived at.

Sir John Cope: I regret that it has not been possible to provide a substantive answer before prorogation. I shall write to the hon. Member shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Housing

Ms Estelle Morris: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to introduce tax incentives for private developers to boost the provision of housing for rent or sale to lower income groups.

Mr. Dorrell: I cannot anticipate my right hon. and learned Friend's Budget statement.

Telephone Sex Lines

Dr. Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimates have been made of the cost to the public purse of the use of telephones at Whitehall to make 0898 sex line calls; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: The Government telephone network lines serving Her Majesty's Treasury bar access to all 0898 numbers.

Rail Season Tickets

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his policy with regard to changing the benefit in kind rules to make interest-free loans to purchase rail season tickets exempt from taxation.

Mr. Dorrell: Most interest-free loans provided by employers to employees to purchase rail season tickets are already exempt from tax. An employee does not pay tax on employer-provided loans where the total benefit of all loans in a year is not more than £300. This exemption saves work for employers, employees and for the Inland Revenue.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his policy with regard to making the cost of rail season tickets tax allowable.

Mr. Dorrell: I cannot anticipate my right hon. and learned Friend's Budget statement. However, under the current law, the cost of rail season tickets for home to work travel is not tax deductible. That applies to both employees and to the self-employed.

VAT (Domestic Fuels)

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list those domestic fuels which *(a)* are and *(b)* are not liable for VAT.

Sir John Cope: All fuels supplied for domestic use are currently zero-rated.

Taxation

Mr. Robert B. Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will set out for each main source of taxation the percentage of the tax yield represented by collection and administrative costs.

Mr. Dorrell: Costs of collection and administration in 1992-93 as a percentage of tax yield are given in the table.

	Per cent.
Income tax	2·42
Corporation tax	0·93
Capital gains tax	3·91
Petroleum revenue tax	2·14
Inheritance tax, capital transfer tax and estate duty	2·16
Stamp duties	0·50
VAT	0·87
Car tax	0·05
Customs duties and associated work	9·74
Excise duties	0·13

Civil Service

Mr. Michael Spicer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list for each of the last 10 years the number of people employed by the civil service.

Mr. Dorrell: The numbers of permanent staff employed at 1 April for each of the last 10 years were:

	Numbers
1984	623,972
1985	599,026
1986	594,365
1987	597,814
1988	579,627
1989	569,215
1990	562,388
1991	553,863
1992	565,319
1993	554,212

Public Sector Borrowing Requirement

Ms Harman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the reasons for the differences between the forecast public sector borrowing requirement of £50·1 billion for 1993-94 contained in table 1.2 of the March 1993 "Financial Statement and Budget Report" and the earlier forecast of £7 billion for the same financial year contained in the March 1991 "Financial Statement and Budget Report"; and if he will estimate how much of this difference was attributable to *(a)* discretionary changes to tax and other receipts, *(b)* discretionary expenditure changes, *(c)* changes in taxation and other receipts resulting from errors in forecasting the level of output, *(d)* changes in expenditure resulting from errors in forecasting the level of output, *(e)* errors in forecasting debt interest and *(f)* other forecasting errors.

Mr. Portillo *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* The recession was longer and deeper than assumed in 1991. The March 1993 "Financial Statement and Budget Report" assumed non-oil GDP grew by over 5 per cent. less between 1991 and 1993 than assumed in 1991. Changes to the Government's public expenditure plans can be found in the 1991 and 1992 autumn statements. Changes in taxes and national insurance contributions are set out in the 1992-93 and 1993-94 editions of the "Financial Statement and Budget Report" and in the 1992 autumn statement.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Overseas Domestic Workers

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department since November 1991, how many overseas domestic workers have applied for indefinite leave to stay on compassionate grounds; and how many have been granted it.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information is that in the period 1 November 1991 to 30 June 1993 150 overseas domestic workers, excluding dependants, were accepted for settlement after four years continuous employment.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many overseas domestic workers have applied to change their employer since November 1991; and how many applications have been granted.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many overseas domestic workers have entered the United Kingdom under the 1980 concession since November 1991; and how many of their employers have reported to the Home Office that their domestic staff have left their employment while in the United Kingdom;

(2) how many employers of overseas domestic workers have reported to his Department that their domestic staff have left their employment while in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Comprehensive information on the number of overseas domestic workers admitted to the United Kingdom at ports of entry is not available. However, it is estimated that approximately 20,000 grants of entry clearance to come to the United Kingdom as a domestic worker under the 1980 concession were made at posts abroad between 1 January 1992 and 31 August 1993. Corresponding information for November and December 1991 is not available.

Information on the numbers of domestic workers reported as having left their employers is not available.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many overseas domestic workers have applied since November 1991 for an extension to their visa; and how many have been granted an extension.

Mr. Charles Wardle: During the period 1 November 1991 to 30 June 1993 a total of 2,340 persons, excluding dependants, were granted an extension of stay in the United Kingdom as an overseas domestic worker under the 1980 concession. The number of applications for an extension is not separately identifiable in the statistics.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the level of abuse and maltreatment of overseas domestic workers; and what measures he is taking in response.

Mr. Charles Wardle: None; but we keep the general arrangements for the overseas domestic workers scheme under review.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Government will include in their "Notice to Employers of Domestic Servants Travelling to the United Kingdom" a statement that it is a criminal offence in the United Kingdom to withhold another person's passport.

Mr. Charles Wardle: No. The information leaflet for domestic servants travelling to the United Kingdom already makes it clear that their passport is an important document and that they should keep it themselves in a safe place. Employers receive a copy of the leaflet for their information.

Children (Indecent Assault)

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing for each of the last three years for each police authority area in England and Wales (i) how many persons were charged with the offence of indecent assault on children, (ii) how many were subsequently prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service and (iii) how many were convicted of the offence.

Mr. Maclean: Information on the number of people charged is not collected centrally. The data relate to the number of persons prosecuted and convicted for offences of indecent assault on a male aged under 16 years and indecent assault on a female aged under 16 years by police force area from 1990 to 1992, which is provisional.

Table 1A

Number of persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts of indecent assault on children by police force area England and Wales 1990

Offence/PFA	*Total proceeded against*	*Total found guilty*
Indecent assault on boy under 16		
Avon and Somerset	17	5
Bedfordshire	3	5
Cambridgeshire	8	7
Cheshire	6	4
Cleveland	6	6
Cumbria	8	7
Derbyshire	19	18
Devon and Cornwall	17	19
Dorset	3	4
Durham	10	9
Essex	13	8
Gloucester	4	4
Greater Manchester	27	21
Hampshire	23	14
Hertfordshire	9	10
Humberside	21	13
Kent	22	24
Lancashire	15	10
Leicestershire	11	5
Lincolnshire	10	5
City of London	—	—
Merseyside	28	16
Metropolitan Police	60	56
Norfolk	11	5
Northamptonshire	2	2
Northumbria	14	6
North Yorkshire	6	4
Nottinghamshire	15	12
South Yorkshire	17	10
Staffordshire	9	7
Suffolk	8	4
Surrey	5	1
Sussex	16	12
Thames Valley	20	15
Warwickshire	2	3
West Mercia	11	7
West Midlands	25	19
West Yorkshire	29	19
Wiltshire	7	3
Dyfed Powys	3	2
Gwent	5	4
North Wales	9	7
South Wales	16	9
England	537	399
Wales	33	22
England and Wales	570	421

Table 1B Number of persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts of indecent assault on children by police force area

England and Wales 1990

Offence/PFA	*Total proceeded against*	*Total found guilty*
Indecent assault on girl under 16		
Avon and Somerset	68	38
Bedfordshire	38	24
Cambridgeshire	36	23
Cheshire	47	30
Cleveland	26	22
Cumbria	24	18
Derbyshire	53	32
Devon and Cornwall	71	60
Dorset	26	16
Durham	30	24
Essex	33	23
Gloucester	23	15
Greater Manchester	174	101
Hampshire	80	47
Hertfordshire	26	20
Humberside	68	49
Kent	58	50
Lancashire	83	63
Leicestershire	24	21
Lincolnshire	43	32
City of London	1	—
Merseyside	87	47
Metropolitan Police	196	115
Norfolk	47	26
Northamptonshire	24	18
Northumbria	67	52
North Yorkshire	30	21
Nottinghamshire	87	57
South Yorkshire	63	43
Staffordshire	48	31
Suffolk	15	13
Surrey	23	14
Sussex	65	47
Thames Valley	27	26
Warwickshire	17	17
West Mercia	42	20
West Midlands	127	70
West Yorkshire	133	92
Wiltshire	29	25
Dyfed Powys	19	12
Gwent	24	12
North Wales	15	14
South Wales	68	57
England	2,159	1,442
Wales	126	95
England and Wales	2,285	1,537

Table 2A
Number of persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts of indecent assault on children by police force area England and Wales 1991

Offence/PFA	Total proceeded against	Total found guilty
Indecent assault on boy under 16		
Avon and Somerset	15	7
Bedfordshire	3	3
Cambridgeshire	9	2
Cheshire	19	7
Cleveland	7	4
Cumbria	2	4
Derbyshire	12	7
Devon and Cornwall	14	15
Dorset	2	2
Durham	2	3
Essex	18	11
Gloucester	5	2
Greater Manchester	31	22
Hampshire	18	13
Hertfordshire	3	1
Humberside	18	13
Kent	15	14
Lancashire	13	9
Leicestershire	13	9
Lincolnshire	13	8
City of London	—	—
Merseyside	25	14
Metropolitan Police	57	41
Norfolk	12	6
Northamptonshire	7	5
Northumbria	9	10
North Yorkshire	3	1
Nottinghamshire	16	4
South Yorkshire	9	10
Staffordshire	10	9
Suffolk	5	1
Surrey	7	7
Sussex	18	10
Thames Valley	18	8
Warwickshire	2	1
West Mercia	6	5
West Midlands	22	10
West Yorkshire	29	21
Wiltshire	6	7
Dyfed Powys	2	3
Gwent	3	5
North Wales	8	7
South Wales	16	10
England	493	326
Wales	29	25
England and Wales	522	351

Table 2B
Number of persons proceeded against at Magistrates' Courts and found guilty at all Courts of indecent assault on children by police force area England and Wales 1991

Offence/PFA	Total proceeded against	Total found guilty
Indecent assault on girl under 16		
Avon and Somerset	63	29
Bedfordshire	19	11
Cambridgeshire	26	16
Cheshire	34	27
Cleveland	29	23
Cumbria	17	14
Derbyshire	46	33
Devon and Cornwall	66	52
Dorset	33	16
Durham	34	25
Essex	39	29
Gloucester	21	13
Greater Manchester	144	102
Hampshire	75	46
Hertfordshire	25	10
Humberside	71	56
Kent	26	39
Lancashire	50	39
Leicestershire	36	25
Lincolnshire	31	14
City of London	1	1
Merseyside	81	47
Metropolitan Police	199	123
Norfolk	29	23
Northamptonshire	23	18
Northumbria	87	52
North Yorkshire	24	19
Nottinghamshire	96	57
South Yorkshire	54	47
Staffordshire	51	39
Suffolk	32	21
Surrey	26	21
Sussex	34	35
Thames Valley	43	24
Warwickshire	15	13
West Mercia	49	26
West Midlands	108	72
West Yorkshire	129	88
Wiltshire	33	21
Dyfed Powys	11	8
Gwent	34	20
North Wales	26	24
South Wales	68	51
England	1,999	1,366
Wales	139	103
England and Wales	2,138	1,469

Table 3A
Number of persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts of indecent assault on children by police force area England and Wales 1992[1]

Offence/Police force area	Total proceeded against	Total found guilty
Indecent assault on boy under 16		
Avon and Somerset	16	11
Bedfordshire	3	2
Cambridgeshire	11	9
Cheshire	13	17
Cleveland	6	3
Cumbria	1	—
Derbyshire	9	6
Devon and Cornwall	8	7
Dorset	10	10
Durham	7	3
Essex	12	5
Gloucester	8	5
Greater Manchester	36	26
Hampshire	13	12
Hertfordshire	5	1
Humberside	10	13
Kent	7	9
Lancashire	18	13
Leicestershire	7	5
Lincolnshire	6	7
City of London	—	—
Merseyside	16	8
Metropolitan Police	43	29
Norfolk	3	—
Northamptonshire	6	7
Northumbria	10	10

Offence/Police force area	Total proceeded against	Total found guilty
North Yorkshire	1	3
Nottinghamshire	16	6
South Yorkshire	13	15
Staffordshire	4	4
Suffolk	9	6
Surrey	3	2
Sussex	13	13
Thames Valley	14	15
Warwickshire	2	3
West Mercia	13	8
West Midlands	22	25
West Yorkshire	26	17
Wiltshire	2	1
Dyfed Powys	2	4
Gwent	10	6
North Wales	6	4
South Wales	17	13
England	422	336
Wales	35	27
England and Wales	457	363

[1] Provisional.

Table 3B Number of persons proceeded against at Magistrates' Courts and found guilty at all courts of indecent assault on children by police force area
England and Wales 1992[1]

Offence/PFA	Total proceeded against	Total found guilty
Indecent assault on Girl under 16		
Avon and Somerset	38	24
Bedfordshire	12	6
Cambridgeshire	42	25
Cheshire	55	44
Cleveland	27	14
Cumbria	12	9
Derbyshire	41	35
Devon and Cornwall	49	36
Dorset	18	11
Durham	31	23
Essex	33	18
Gloucester	20	14
Greater Manchester	192	101
Hampshire	79	50
Hertfordshire	33	22
Humberside	51	44
Kent	28	46
Lancashire	41	40
Leicestershire	30	12
Lincolnshire	23	12
Merseyside	60	47
Metropolitan Police[2]	179	90
Norfolk	25	23
Northamptonshire	17	16
Northumbria	73	61
North Yorkshire	35	17
Nottinghamshire	104	65
South Yorkshire	57	40
Staffordshire	39	30
Suffolk	21	13
Surrey	6	4
Sussex	59	29
Thames Valley	45	29
Warwickshire	18	9
West Mercia	42	31
West Midlands	101	63
West Yorkshire	104	66
Wiltshire	16	16
Dyfed Powys	24	16
Gwent	28	11
North Wales	30	24
South Wales	67	45
England	1,856	1,235
Wales	149	96
England and Wales	2,005	1,331

[1] Provisional
[2] Including City of London

Political Refugees

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many political refugees are now resident in the United Kingdom; and if he will publish a table showing how many are from each country.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information is that in the period 1979 to mid-1993 around 41,800 persons, including associated dependants, were given leave to remain in the United Kingdom as a refugee. These comprise some 18,500 asylum applicants who were recognised as a refugee and granted asylum in the United Kingdom, and 23,300 south-east Asian refugees accepted for settlement on arrival. Information on the number of these cases who have since died, left the country, obtained British citizenship or otherwise ceased to hold refugee status here, and information prior to 1979, is not available.

An analysis by main nationalities of grants of asylum in the years 1979 to 1984, including associated dependants, is given in table 3 of Home Office statistical bulletin issue 22/90 "Refugee Statistics, United Kingdom 1989". An analysis by main nationalities of grants in the period 1985 to mid-1993, excluding dependants, is given in table 3.1 of Home Office statistical bulletin issue 19/93 "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 1992" and in the table. An analysis of these figures including dependants is not readily available. A comparison of figures for total grants of asylum including and excluding dependants is given in table 1.2 of issue 19/93.

Copies of the above publications are in the Library.

Cases[1][2] *recognised as refugees and granted asylum, excluding dependants, by nationality, 1 January to 30 June 1993*
Number of grants to principal applicants

Nationality	1993 (Jan-Jun)
Europe and Americas	
Bulgaria	—
Colombia	5
Romania	—
Turkey	255
Former USSR	—
Former Yugoslavia	—
Other	5
TOTAL	260
Africa	
Angola	5
Congo	—
Ethiopia	20
Ghana	5
Nigeria	—
Somalia	40
Sudan	700
Togo and Ivory Coast	'
Uganda	'
Zaire	'
Other	25
TOTAL	795

Nationality	1993 (Jan-Jun)
Middle East	
Iran	65
Iraq	105
Lebanon	15
Other	25
TOTAL	210
Asia	
China	5
India	—
Pakistan	—
Sri Lanka	5
Other	5
TOTAL	15
Other, and nationality not known	—
Total	1,280
Acceptances for settlement of South-East Asian refugees (including dependants)	300

[1]Figures rounded to the nearest 5 with *=1 or 2.
[2]Provisional figures.

European Parliamentary Constituencies

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations the Welsh Boundary Commission has received from Welsh community councils regarding the new European parliamentary constituency boundaries; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The task of reviewing European parliamentary constituency boundaries is being undertaken by the European Parliamentary Constituencies Committee for Wales. It received 69 representations from town and community councils before the deadline of 13 October and eight representations after the deadline. The representations received before the deadline were placed on public deposit on 1 November at the places I listed in my reply to a question from the hon. Member for Gower (Mr. Wardell) on 26 October 1993, *Official Report,* columns *588-89.*

Nuclear Smuggling

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on proposals for integrated police co-operation between EC member states to combat the smuggling of nuclear materials, as announced by Commissioner Matutes in the European Commission reply of 22 October to European Parliament question No. 1642/93.

Mr. Charles Wardle: No such proposals were announced by the Commission. Police co-operation between the member states takes place intergovernmentally and the Commission has no right of initiative in this area.

Burglaries

Mr. Blair: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many of the domestic burglars in the study of those given community service orders in 1987 were reconvicted of burglary within *(a)* one year and *(b)* two years from sentence; of how many further burglary offences those who were reconvicted were found guilty on average within (i) one year and (ii) two years; and what multiplier was used to arrive at the estimated average of between three and 13 offences per burglar over 12 months quoted in his Department's new release 220/93 dated 18 October;

(2) what is the average number of further burglaries committed by domestic burglars released from prison service custody over *(a)* one year and *(b)* two years.

Mr. Maclean: Of the 193 domestic burglars covered in the study cited by the Home Office director of research and statistics, 96 or 50 per cent, were reconvicted of at least one standard list offence within 12 months—standard list offences include all indictable offences and a few of the more serious types of summary offence. The 96 offenders were convicted between them of 122 further offences, of which 43 per cent. were estimated to have been burglaries —on the basis of the breakdown of offences involved in the first reconviction only. It was assumed that for each of the 122 reconvictions, between five and 20 further offences were committed without resulting in convictions. This assumption was made on the basis of what is known about unreported, unrecorded and undetected crime.

The analysis did not look at this group's reconvictions over the two years following conviction. Neither these figures nor comparable statistics for burglars released from prison service custody are readily available. I shall write to the hon. Member when the statistical analysis has been carried out.

Reoffenders

Mr. Riddick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the reoffending rate of those who have *(a)* served prison sentences, *(b)* served probation orders and *(c)* served community sentences for the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Maclean: The available information on reconviction rates for standard list offences is given in the table. Reconviction rates during the two-year period after prison discharge for discharges in the years 1984 to 1986 were published in the issues for 1987 to 1989 of "Prison Statistics England and Wales". The 1987 results in the table are based on an improved methodology and the results for earlier years are not consistent with them. Results for 1988 are not yet available.

Reconviction rates for the two-year period after commencement of probation orders and community service orders in 1988 were given in "Probation Statistics England and Wales 1992", chapter 13. Results for 1987 are given in the table.

Reconviction rates are not available for the previous three years.

Copies of these publications are available in the Library of the House.

These results are shown:

Persons reconvicted of a standard list[1] offence within two years of commencement of a probation order or community service order or within two years of discharge from a prison service establishment

Percentages

Year of commencement	*All*	*Males*	*Females*
After commencement of probation order			
1987	52	56	37
1988	51	55	35
After commencement of community sentence			
1987	54	55	41
1988	53	53	50
After discharge from prison			
Year of discharge			
[2]1984	54	55	34
[2]1985	52	53	34
[2]1986	50	50	34
1987	57	57	40

[1] Standard list offence as defined in "Criminal Statistics" England and Wales 1990, Cm. 1935; covers all indictable offences and a few more serious summary offences.

[2] Figures prior to 1987 are based on a different methodology including microfiche based matching which resulted in lower reconviction rates by some 5 or 6 percentage points.

Parole Board

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home reneepartment if he will give details of the contract of employment of the full-time member of the Parole Board.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The full-time members of the Parole Board have the same status as other members of the board. They are not officials of the Home Office. Their term of appointment is for an initial period of two or three years, renewable for two further periods of two years. They were appointed on a salary of £30,207 per annum plus a non-contributory pension.

Security Service Report

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the publication "MI5: The Security Service" cost to produce; and how many copies were printed.

Mr. Howard: A total of 14,100 copies of "MI5: The Security Service" were printed. The costs of printing and publication were borne by HMSO which aims to recover its costs from sales revenue.

Immigration (Somalia)

Mr. Dicks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals from Somalia have been granted entry into Britain since 1990; and under what conditions such entry was granted.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Information on the total number of nationals of Somalia given leave to enter the United Kingdom is given in the table.

Nationals of Somalia given leave to enter the United Kingdom

	Number of journeys
1990	4,330
1991	3,650
1992	5,500
1993[1]	2,140

[1] January to June.

An analysis of the data for 1990-92 by purpose of journey is given in table 3.1 of Home Office Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 1992"—Cm 2368—and in table 1 of the corresponding volumes for 1990 and 1991—Cm 1571 and 2063. Corresponding information for January to June 1993 is not readily available. Copies of the above publications are in the Library.

These figures include persons who have applied for asylum at ports—and their dependants—and who have been granted asylum or exceptional leave. They exclude persons granted temporary admission.

Mr. Amanullah Khan

Mr. Madden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the appropriate United Kingdom authorities were last informed by Interpol of an outstanding arrest warrant, issued in India, relating to Mr. Amanullah Khan, the chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, a Pakistan national, concerning alleged offences in India-occupied Kashmir; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The United Kingdom national central bureau of Interpol received notification in May 1990 that the arrest of Amanullah Khan was requested, with a view to extradition, by the Indian national central bureau of Interpol. This wanted notice remained in force until his arrest in Belgium on 18 October 1993.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Madden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many individuals and their dependants have been admitted to enter the United Kingdom this year to date from the former Yugoslavia as urgent medical cases; how many such people remain in the United Kingdom; how many have left the United Kingdom; what is their present country of residence; and how many individuals and their dependants are awaiting permission to enter the United Kingdom for medical treatment;

(2) how many *(a)* ex-detainees and *(b)* their dependants have, to date, been given permission to enter the United Kingdom following his announcements of October and November 1992; how many people deemed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to be vulnerable, and their dependants have, to date, been admitted to the United Kingdom following his decision to admit them; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: As at 4 November, a total of 357 particularly vulnerable individuals—including ex-detainees—and 569 dependants, have arrived under these arrangements. A further 49 individuals and 65 dependants are due to arrive on 5 November.

These figures include 22 urgent medical cases, and 21 dependants, that have arrived this year. The available information suggests that all these 43 persons are still in the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom is prepared to consider any request from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross for persons from the former Yugoslavia to come here for medical treatment.

Mr. Dicks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals from the former Yugoslavia have been granted entry into Britain since the troubles began; and under what conditions such entry was granted.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Information on the total number of nationals of the former Yugoslavia given leave to enter the United Kingdom in the period 1 September 1991 to 30 June 1993 is given in the table.

Nationals of the former Yugoslavia given leave to enter the United Kingdom

	Number of journeys
1991 September-December	17,300
1992	49,900
1993 January-June	18,500

An analysis by the purpose of journey for 1992 is given in table 3.1 of Home Office Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 1992" (Cm. 2368), a copy of which is in the Library. Corresponding information for September to December 1991 and for January to June 1993 is not readily available.

These figures include persons who have applied for asylum at ports—and their dependants—and who have been granted asylum or exceptional leave. They exclude persons granted temporary admission.

Road Deaths

Mr. Livingstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department from what sources funding is available for the support of families of people killed in road accidents; how much funding is available; and how it is allocated.

Mr. Maclean: This is not a matter for which I have any Departmental responsibility. However, I am informed by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport that where a motorist is at fault, the victim of a road accident—or, in fatal cases, surviving relatives—may be compensated either by the motorist, his insurers, or in the case of untraced or uninsured drivers, by the Motor Insurers Bureau. I further understand that state support in the form of social security provision may be available if the relevant criteria are satisfied.

Wheel Clamping

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will make a statement on plans to regulate wheel clamping on private land.

Mr. Maclean: Presently, we have no such plans. In the light of the consultation exercise conducted earlier this year, we are still considering what action it might be appropriate for the Government to initiate.

British Summer Time

Mr. Hain: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a table showing the times of sunrise and sunset on 21 December and on the first day of each month in 1994 in *(a)* Newcastle, *(b)* Belfast, *(c)* Liverpool, *(d)* Wrexham, *(e)* Holyhead and *(f)* Aberystwyth under (i) the present arrangements of British summer time and Greenwich mean time and (ii) under British summer time plus one hour and Greenwich mean time plus one hour.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The information requested is not immediately available, but is being obtained. I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library.

Dangerous Dogs

Mr. Anthony Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many dogs have been seized under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991;

(2) how many dogs have been put down under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 to date.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Information on the numbers of dogs which have been seized by the police and local authorities and those destroyed as a result of court proceedings under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 is not collected centrally. Information on the number of prosecutions, convictions and cautions under the Act for 1992 is expected to be available in December and I shall write to my hon. Friend as soon as the information becomes available.

Mr. Anthony Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what breeds are now proscribed as dangerous dogs.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 currently applies to any dog of the types known as the pit bull terrier, the Japanese tosa, the Dogo Argentino and the Fila Braziliero.

Criminal Records

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the implications for personal social services of the possible introduction of charging for police checks on individual criminal records.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The effect of the possible introduction of charging for vetting checks is raised in paragraphs 64 to 70 of the Home Office consultation paper entitled "Disclosure of criminal records for employment vetting purposes"—Cm 2319—laid before the House on 9 September. Question 6 of the paper specifically invites comments on charging. The paper is available to local authorities and local authority associations. The consultation period expires on 31 December when further consideration will be given to this matter in the light of comments made.

Miscarriages of Justice

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consideration he has given to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on criminal

justice that an independent review authority should be established to investigate alleged miscarriages of justice; and what plans he has for implementing this recommendation in the next year.

Mr. Maclean: I will write to the hon. Member.

Prison Visits

Mr. Etherington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list by prison establishment, year by year, the total number of individual prison visits to prisoners, and the total number of visits by hon. Members, for each year since 1989.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Etherington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will list by category of establishment the total number of prisons which, for the purposes of examination of clothing and baggage, do not have or use *(a)* X-ray machines or *(b)* metal detectors;

(2) if he will list the total number of incidents in each year since 1989, where visitors to prisons have had weapons or other unsuitable metallic items *(a)* found on their person and *(b)* confiscated;

(3) if he will place in the Library a copy of the procedures governing searches for visitors to prison establishments.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: I will write to the hon. Member.

Chief Inspector of Fire Services

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who is to be the next Chief Inspector of Fire Services.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Bryan Collins OBE, Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire Services, will become Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire Services in succession to Sir Reginald Doyle CBE, who retires on 31 December.

Young Offenders

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what is this timetable for setting up secure training centres; and what is his estimate of the cost in this financial year and in 1994-95;

(2) what is his timetable for implementing the proposal to double the maximum sentence in young offender institutions; and what is his estimate of the cost in this financial year and in 1994-95.

Mr. Maclean *[holding answer 19 October 1993]:* I will write to the hon. Member.

Criminal Justice Act 1993

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is his estimate of the amount of police time that would be required to deal adequately with the information disclosed to *(a)* the Metropolitan police and *(b)* other police forces in England and Wales as a result of implementation in full of the Criminal Justice Act 1993; what additional resources in each case have been provided by his Department (i) in cash terms and (ii) in terms of establishment in the current year; and how much will be provided in 1994-95.

Mr. Charles Wardle *[holding answer 4 November 1993]:* The new disclosure requirement has not been identified as a significant new burden at national level, although a working party is continuing to review the implications for the Metropolitan police.

No provision has been made for additional resources.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Terrorism

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what plans he has to review his instructions to the broadcasting authorities concerning the broadcasting of direct speech by supporters of terrorism; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Brooke: I am undertaking a review of the notices first issued to the broadcasting authorities in October 1988 by the Home Secretary concerning the reporting of direct speech by members of terrorist organisations and their supporters. I will announce the results of this review as soon as is consistent with a thorough examination.

EMPLOYMENT

Fares To Work Scheme

Mrs. Helen Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment (1) what plans he has to alter the criteria for the fares to work scheme for disabled people;

(2) how many disabled people made a successful application to the fares to work scheme in 1992 and 1993; and how many applicants were unsuccessful;

(3) how much his Department spent on the fares to work scheme for disabled people in 1992 and 1993; and how much he intends to spend in 1994.

Miss Widdecombe: After 31 March 1994 the fares to work scheme, which helps people with disabilities who are unable to use public transport and who, as a result of their disability, incur extra costs in travelling to and from work, will be replaced by help under the access to work scheme. The main criteria for help under access to work were given in my answer to the hon. Member for Clwyd, North-West (Mr. Richards), *Official Report*, 22 June 1993, column *102*. The current requirement for those being helped with fares to work to be registered under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944 will be removed. We are considering what transitional arrangements might be appropriate for existing beneficiaries.

The money spent on the fares to work scheme in 1992-93 and 1992-93 was £1,647,857 and £1,800,744 respectively. The numbers helped through the fares to work scheme in 1991-92 and 1992-93 were 1,495 and 1,789 respectively; of these 655 and 433 were new beneficiaries. Statistics on unsuccessful applicants are not collected. Provision for assistance with fares to work in 1994-95 is not identifiable as it has been included in the overall access to work budget. Under access to work, in addition to help with fares, new forms of travel to work help, such as adapting vehicles, can be provided.

Gas Installers

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what representations he has received concerning the annual report of the Council for Registered Gas Installers; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: None.

Departmental Staff

Mrs. Clywd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many civil servants are currently employed at his Department's offices at Caxton House; and how many were women *(a)* in 1990, and *(b)* at the latest date for which figures are available.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: A total of 1,319 at 1 October 1993, of which 667 were women. The comparable figures for 1 October 1990 were 1,354 and 686 respectively. These figures comprise staff in all the Department's London headquarters offices.

Mrs. Clywd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many women are employed at each Civil Service grade in his Department as a whole; and what percentage of each grade is constituted by women.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The numbers and percentages of women in each grade in the Employment Department Group at 1 October 1993 are set out in the following table:

Women in the employment department group at 1 October 1993

Grade	*Number*	*Percentage*
Administrative assistant	2,306	74·9
Administrative officer	24,267	75·4
Typist	716	99·6
Executive officer	11,586	67·5
Administrative trainee	4	80·0
Management trainee	35	60·3
Higher executive officer (D)	8	42·1
Higher executive officer	1,838	42·4
Senior executive officer	342	26·9
Grade 7	185	24·3
Grade 6	14	9·9
Grade 5	22	20·2
Grade 4	0	0·0
Grade 3	1	4·2
Grade 2	1	20·0
Grade 1	0	0·0

Employment Service (Female Staff)

Mrs. Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many women are employed by the employment service; and what is this figure as a percentage of the total work force of the employment service.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service Agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mrs. Ann Clwyd, dated 5 November 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the number of women employed by the Employment Service. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

We currently employ a total of 49,405 people. Of these, 35,314 are women, which represents 71·5 per cent. of the total workforce.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the *Official Report*. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Construction Workers

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish a table for each year since 1979 listing how many construction workers are unemployed, set out by trade or skill.

Miss Widdecombe: Information on the previous industry and occupation of people unemployed on the International Labour Organisation definition is available from the Labour Force Survey from 1984 onwards. People in a wide range of occupations are employed by the construction industry and information can be obtained for specific occupations via the Quantime LFS service available in the Library.

Training and Enterprise Councils

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is his policy on transferring the operations of under-performing TECs to the more successful TECs.

Miss Widdecombe: Training and enterprise councils have been in existence only three years and generally perform well. However, the performance of each TEC is kept constantly under review and the Department takes appropriate action to ensure any necessary improvements. An independent assessors committee, chaired by Sir Anthony Cleaver, has been set up to advise the Department on TEC performance.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list for each training and enterprise council in England for the two most recent years for which figures are available the amounts paid in error to *(a)* trainees and *(b)* training providers.

Miss Widdecombe: Recovery of identified overpayments, including those made to training and enterprise councils and trainees is vigorously pursued, but the information is not held in the form requested.

Community Action

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many of the originally announced 20,000 community action places have been taken up.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service Agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M.E.G. Fogden to Mr. Andrew Hunter, dated 5 November 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the number of Community Action places currently taken up. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

It may be helpful if I explain a little about the background to Community Action and our plans for the provision of the announced places.

Community Action is a programme to help long-term unemployed people back into work, by providing work experience on projects of benefit to local communities. In the Spring Budget the then Chancellor committed £113·5m, sufficient to provide 20,000 places and help 60,000 people in a full year. Following extensive consultation and development of this new programme, to ensure quality and value for money, the first places became available at the end of July.

Community Action opportunities will be delivered, in the main, by voluntary/charitable organisations and my people in the Employment Service Regional Offices are responsible for contracting with them. The contracting round is now well advanced with contracts already awarded for over half of the places. About 1,000 places have been taken up by long-term unemployed people so far and numbers are increasing steadily. The programme is planned to build to 20,000 filled places by the end of March.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report, I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will encourage TECs to include on their boards elected representatives from their local district or borough council.

Miss Widdecombe: Each training and enterprise council has up to five board members who are drawn from outside the private sector covering such interests as education, the public sector and voluntary organisations.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the budget for each TEC in England in 1993-94.

Miss Widdecombe: The following tables show the programme budget agreed for each training and enterprise council in England for 1993-94:

TEC budgets 1993-94

	£
Hampshire	35,630,129
Heart of England	11,885,173
Isle of Wight	4,334,721
Kent	39,354,811
Milton Keynes/North Bucks	10,124,085
Surrey	14,079,069
Sussex	26,947,238
Thames Valley Enterprise	27,447,439
South East Total	169,802,665
AZTEC	14,447,052
CENTEC	28,464,545
CILNTEC	26,796,372
LETEC	44,436,432
North London	21,830,902
North West London	13,378,939
SOLOTEC	21,923,607
South Thames	43,742,853
West London	19,470,586
London Total	234,491,288
Bedfordshire	13,396,288
Cambridgeshire	7,864,985
Essex	34,790,593
Greater Peterborough	11,059,274
Hertfordshire	26,155,368
Norfolk-Waveney	25,868,017
Suffolk	16,926,462
Eastern Total	136,060,987
Avon	32,212,180
Devon-Cornwall	59,261,247
Dorset	18,656,520
Gloucestershire	15,213,499
Somerset	13,995,143
Wiltshire	15,900,438
South West Total	155,239,027
Birmingham	48,195,645
Central England	11,807,673
Coventry-Warwickshire	31,058,998
Dudley	12,919,763
HAWTEC	13,658,026
Sandwell	13,438,531
Shropshire	14,913,449
Staffordshire	36,957,718
Walsall	10,517,059
Wolverhampton	13,059,220
West Midlands Total	206,526,082
Greater Nottinghamshire	24,308,666
Leicester	27,047,479
Lincolnshire	26,886,790
North Derbyshire	11,962,736
North Nottinghamshire	17,580,410
Northants	14,450,582
South Derbyshire	19,203,242
East Midlands Total	141,439,905
Humberside	39,256,668
North Yorkshire	18,750,543
Wakefield	14,020,400
Sheffield	28,518,555
Rotherham	13,954,615
Barnsley/Doncaster	31,163,721
Leeds	25,028,682
Bradford	22,208,611
Calderdale/Kirklees	29,153,032
Yorkshire and Humberside Total	222,054,727
Bolton/Bury	15,765,677
Manchester	42,513,454
METROTEC	12,136,378
Oldham	9,724,649
Rochdale	10,223,115
South and East Cheshire	15,160,338
Stockport	11,860,770
North West (GM) Total	117,384,381
CEWTEC	24,750,760
Cumbria	18,823,066
ELTEC	20,350,366
LAWTEC	31,446,744
Merseyside	64,817,830
NORMID	16,318,557
QUALITEC	11,894,165
North West (W) Total	188,401,488
Durham	33,523,129
Northumberland	16,719,609
Teeside	38,187,466
Tyneside	49,473,678
Wearside	22,607,990
Northern Total	160,511,872

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list the providers of Training for Work which have contracts with five or more TECs in England and Wales.

Miss Widdecombe: The information sought is not held centrally. Training and enterprise councils themselves decide which training providers to contract with.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list the amount held in reserves by each of the training and enterprise councils in England;

(2) if he will list those training and enterprise councils in England where internal audit arrangements are not currently in place.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list those training and enterprise councils in England where auditors have found defects in accounting control systems.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Construction Workers

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is his latest estimate of the number of unemployed construction workers.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I will write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Community Action

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has to expand the community action programme.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Wages Councils

Mrs. Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what estimate his Department has made of the potential for an increase in labour supply as a consequence of the abolition of wages councils.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Unemployment-Mental Health Links

Mrs. Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what studies his Department has undertaken or commissioned into the links between unemployment and mental health.

Mr. Bowis: I have been asked to reply.
I will write to the hon. Member.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Child Support Agency

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how many maintenance application forms were issued to *(a)* persons with care under section 4, *(b)* parents with care under section 6, *(c)* absent parents and *(d)* child applicants (Scotland) in the first six months of the Child Support Agency's operation;

(2) what the live caseload of the Child Support Agency currently stands at; and what it is expected to be at April in each year from 1994 to 1998;

(3) how many assessments were completed after an application from a *(a)* person with care not in receipt of income support, family credit or disability working allowance, *(b)* parent with care in receipt of income support, *(c)* parent with care in receipt of family credit, *(d)* parent with care in receipt of disability working allowance and *(e)* non-parent with care in receipt of income support, family credit or disability working allowance in the first six months of the Child Support Agency's operation; and what were the targets for the same period;

(4) how many maintenance application forms were issued to *(a)* persons with care not in receipt of income support, family credit or disability working allowance, *(b)* parents with care in receipt of income support, *(c)* parents with care in receipt of family credit, *(d)* parents with care in receipt of disability working allowance and *(e)* non-parents with care in receipt of income support, family credit or disability working allowance over the first six months of the Child Support Agency's operation;

(5) how many assessments were completed after an application by *(a)* persons with care under section 4, *(b)* parents with care under section 6, *(c)* absent parents and *(d)* child applicants (Scotland) in the first six months of the Child Support Agency's operation; and what were the targets for the same period.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from R. Hepplewhite to Mr. Archy Kirkwood, dated 5 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking various questions about the Agency.

You ask about the number of Maintenance Application Forms (MAFs) issued to parents with care, absent parents and also to child applicants in Scotland in the first six months and for future years.

To 30 September 1993, 19,500 MAFs had been sent to parents with care who do not receive one of the prescribed benefits, 384,500 to parents with care receiving Income Support, and 123,000 to parents with care receiving Family Credit or Disability Working Allowance.

I am sorry but the Agency does not collect separate figures for Scotland nor is information available on the number of absent parents who requested a MAF although the numbers are estimated to be very low.

The Agency has issued 527,000 MAFs in total in the first 6 months of operations and for each of the years 1994 to 1998 expect to issue numbers of MAFs as follows:

Year	*Number*
1994	1,010,000
1995	860,000
1996	868,000
1997	696,000
1998	690,000

You also ask about the numbers of assessments completed. The Agency had completed 366,120 assessments to the 30 September.

I hope you find this information useful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Mr. Mills: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how many fathers separated from their wives and not paying any maintenance have been traced and made to pay maintenance by the Child Support Agency;

(2) how many responsible fathers paying maintenance at present by court judgment have had their agreed maintenance increased significantly by the introduction of the Child Support Agency system;

(3) how many fathers separated from their wives with children within the child support system are paying maintenance.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from R. Hepplewhite to Mr. Iain Mills, dated 5 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking various questions concerning the Agency's operations.

You ask how many fathers are paying maintenance under the new child support system and, secondly how many of them were not paying maintenance previously and have been traced by the Child Support Agency. The answer to the first question is that the Agency has now assessed child maintenance in 36,610 cases. We estimate that in half of these cases the absent parent was not previously paying maintenance. Over the course of the year we estimate that around two thirds of cases taken on by the Agency will be ones where no maintenance was previously in payment.

In answer to your second question about tracing absent parents. At 30 September, 326,700 Maintenance Application Forms (MAFs) had been returned and the Agency had already contacted over 166,000 of the absent parents involved.

Where the MAF shows that an absent parent's whereabouts are not known, the Agency checks Departmental records to establish their current address. If this is not available the case is referred for specialist tracing action. The Agency has completed such specialist action in 7,700 of these cases, and has successfully traced the absent parent in 7,000 cases, 92 per cent. In September alone, over 2,500 absent parents were located by the Agency's specialist tracing sections. The average time taken in each case is not recorded.

On your third question, about the level of maintenance, the Child Support Act provides for maintenance to be assessed by means of a standard formula that produces predictable and realistic amounts. However, as the Agency has only been operating since April this year it is too early to be able to say what overall effect the Agency has had on the level of maintenance payments. It has always been made clear that the amount of maintenance worked out by the Agency under the formula may be higher than a previous court order in some cases. Average maintenance payments were £25 to £30 a week and under the formula the average is expected to be £45 to £50 a week.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security in how many Child Support Agency cases the named alleged absent parent has disputed paternity; in how many of these cases the alleged absent parent has been interviewed; how many of these cases have been abandoned; in how many cases the Child Support Agency has initiated court proceedings on paternity; and how many cases are still awaiting Child Support Agency decision on whether to take court action.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from R. Hepplewhite to Ms Jean Corston, dated 4 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking for information where there has been a dispute over paternity.

At the end of September 1993, the Agency had identified just over 900 cases where paternity was an issue. Although the Agency does not collect figures on the number of absent parents interviewed, 161 of these cases have been resolved and 17 have been referred for court action. In around 700 cases, the matter is still under consideration.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how many parents with care have been exempted from the requirement to co-operate with the Child Support Agency on the grounds of risk of harm or undue distress; and in how many cases a parent with care has given evidence to the Child Support Agency about a risk of harm or undue distress in each quarter of the Child Support Agency's operation;

(2) how many of the maintenance application forms returned to the Child Support Agency by persons with care provided a current address for the absent parent; in the remaining cases, where a full name was provided, what were the average times taken to trace the absent parent; and how many cases have been abandoned to date;

(3) how many reduced benefits directions have been issued for each quarter of the Child Support Agency's operation.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member shortly and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from R. Hepplewhite to Ms Jean Corston, dated 4 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about revelant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security about absent parents and the requirement to co-operate with the Agency in arranging maintenance, and also about tracing absent parents and reduced benefit directions where a parent with care has refused to co-operate.

At 30 September 1993, the number of cases where the requirement to co-operate had been an issue was 6,600. In 4,900 of these, the Agency accepted that the parent with care had good cause not to co-operate in pursuing a maintenance claim. Of those cases in which "good cause" was not accepted, 22 have been referred to the Benefits Agency for the prescribed benefit reduction.

You ask about Maintenance Application Forms (MAFs) and tracing absent parents. At 30 September, 326,700 MAFs had been returned and the Agency had already contacted over 166,000 of the absent parents involved.

Where the MAF shows that an absent parent's whereabouts are not known, the Agency checks Departmental records to establish their current address. If this is not available the case is referred for specialist tracing action. The Agency has completed such specialist action in 7,700 of these cases, and has successfully traced the absent parent in 7,000 cases, 92 per cent. In September

alone, over 2,500 absent parents were located by the Agency's specialist tracing sections. The average time taken in each case is not recorded.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Corporate Clothing

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton (Mr. Kaufman) of 5 May, *Official Report,* columns *159-60,* what corporate clothing is provided for Benefit Agency staff; and how much it has cost nationally in the last year.

Mr. Burt: The provision of corporate clothing to staff of the Benefits Agency is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from M. Bichard to Mr. Martyn Jones, dated 4 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions raised about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking what corporate clothing is provided for Benefits Agency staff; and how much it has cost nationally in the last year.

The national cost of corporate clothing, for the financial year 1992-93, was in the region of £1·7 million.

The corporate clothing range currently includes jackets, shirts, blouses, cardigans, trousers, ties, maternity dresses, belts, wet weather costs and polo shirts.

As I explained in my reply to the Hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, corporate clothing, as part of the customer service initiative, is provided for staff who have face to face dealings with customers.

I should also stress again that funding for this clothing comes from office running costs, and not out of the budgets allocated to benefits.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Benefits, Lewisham

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security on how many occasions social security fraud was detected in the London borough of Lewisham in each of the past five years; how many claimants were proceeded against; and, of these, how many were convicted by the courts.

Mr. Hague: The administration of Fraud detection is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from M. Bichard to Ms Joan Ruddock dated 4 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions raised about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking on how many occasions social security fraud was detected in the London Borough of Lewisham in each of the past five years; how many claimant were proceeded against; and of these, how many were convicted by the courts.

You should note that although I have provided statistics for the Fraud Sector based at Lewisham, that office's boundaries do not correspond with county or borough boundaries and the figures provided include some customers living in the London Borough of Greenwich and to a lesser extent the London Borough of Southwark.

The Sector Fraud organisation has only been in existence since January 1991 and therefore the first full year for which figures are available is the year ending 31 March 1992. In that year there were a total of 3,563 social security investigations into fraud and 40 prosecutions by the Fraud Sector at Lewisham. For the year ending March 1993 there were a total of 4,351 investigations into fraud and 38 prosecutions. For this year to date there have been 1,766 investigations and 13 prosecutions.

Information on the number of convictions from those prosecutions is not available, but I can tell you that the rate of conviction by the Courts dealing with Social Security fraud prosecutions is in excess of 97 per cent. of those cases in which proceedings are taken.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Medical Assessments

Mrs. Ray Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what fee is paid by the Benefits Agency to medical practitioners as a sessional fee for providing information relating to benefits which require medical assessment; if he will give details of the fee paid to each practitioner; which fund the payments are from; if he will list the amount paid as the sessional fee for each of the last five years; if he will give details of the arrangements of the scheme and how the figure is calculated; what discussions his Department has had with the British Medical Association; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hague: The administration of the Benefits Agency is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from M. Bichard to Mrs Ray Michie, dated 4 November 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions raised about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking what fee is paid by the Benefits Agency to medical practitioners as a sessional fee for providing information relating to benefits which require medical assessment; if he will give details of the fee paid to each practitioner; which fund the payments are from; if he will list the amount paid as the sessional fee for each of the last five years; if he will give details of the arrangements of the scheme and how the figure is calculated; what discussions his Department has had with the British Medical Association.

Medical practitioners are employed on a sessional basis to provide examinations and assessments for claims of benefit under the Industrial Injuries (II) scheme and for claims for Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA). They also examine customers claiming Invalidity Benefit (IVB). The sessional fees are provided from the Administrative and Miscellaneous Services vote and are currently payable as follows:

Medical Boards (examining and assessing claims for II and SDA).

	£
Chairman	88·40
Members	77·10
Single doctor acting as a board	88·40
Examining medical practitioner (EMP) (examining for IVB).	
	88·40

The seesional fees for each of the last five years are given in the attached annex.

The arrangements of the scheme are such that the number of examinations undertaken in a session will depend on the nature and/or complexity of the cases and the number of customers who attend.

For some time now, Treasury have been responsible for negotiating indicative fees for doctors undertaking work for Government Departments with the British Medical Association (BMA). Treasury consent to increases in fees, provided that any additional costs can be contained within the Departments' cash and running cost limits. They are therefore indicative and not binding upon individual Government Departments and their Agencies. In previous years, the Treasury maximum for these fees was in the region of public sector pay increases. However, the maximum negotiated this year was well above public sector pay increases and therefore the Benefits Agency could not contain the increases within their cash and running cost limits and were, therefore, unable to implement the new rates.

Representatives from the Benefits Agency Medical Services have met with the BMA's Private Practice and Professional Fees Committee to explain the Benefits Agency's position on the payment of fees.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

	£
From 1 April 1988	
Chairman and EMP	64·50
Members	56·40
Single doctor acting as a board	64·50
From 1 April 1989	
Chairman and EMP	69·80
Members	61·00
Single doctor acting as a board	69·80
From 1 April 1990	
Chairman and EMP	74·60
Members	65·20
Single doctor acting as a board	74·60
From 1 January 1991	
Chairman and EMP	76·90
Members	66·70
Single doctor acting as a board	76·90
From 1 April 1991	
Chairman and EMP	81·90
Members	71·60
Single doctor acting as a board	81·90
From 1 April 1992	
Chairman and EMP	88·40
Members	77·10
Single doctor acting as a board	88·40

Child Support Agency

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how many existing income support claimants remain to be taken on by the Child Support Agency before April 1996; and what are the targets for taking on income support cases for each year to 1995-96;

(2) if he will publish a table showing the average length of time from the Child Support Agency issuing a maintenance application form to the issue of the notification of an assessment, broken down into the average length of time taken *(a)* from the issue of the maintenance application form to the return of the form, *(b)* from the receipt of the completed maintenance application form to the issue of a maintenance inquiry form by the Child Support Agency, *(c)* from the issue of a maintenance inquiry form to the return of the form and *(d)* from the receipt of a completed maintenance inquiry form to the issue of the notification of an assessment;

(3) how many income support claimants were issued with maintenance application forms in each month since April; how many of these were new claimants; and how many of the existing claimants were already receiving maintenance before Child Support Agency involvement.

Mr. Burt: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Wicks: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how many times inspectors have been used by the Child Support Agency as permitted under section 15 of the Child Support Act 1991; for what purposes they have been used; and in what areas;

(2) (i) in how many child support maintenance assessments payments are being made via the Child Support Agency, (ii) in how many cases there has been a request from a Child Support Agency client for the Child Support Agency to collect the payments from the absent parent, (iii) how many of these requests came from persons with care on income support, persons with care on family credit or disability working allowance, persons with care not on a relevant benefit and absent parents and (iv) whether any of these requests were refused;

(3) (i) how many arrears notices have been issued by the Child Support Agency, (ii) how many arrears agreements have been entered into and (iii) in how many Child Support Agency assessments there are arrears outstanding for more than 28 days; what percentage these figures are of the number of assessments made; and what is the estimated total amount of child support maintenance in arrears;

(4) how many deductions from earnings orders have been issued by the Child Support Agency; and what percentage this is of the Child Support Agency caseload;

(5) how many of the total section 4 applicants have opted to use the Child Support Agency collection service.

Mr. Burt: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) in how many cases the Child Support Agency has sought confidential informaion regarding the personal finances of an absent partner from that person's bank;

(2) on how many occasions the Child Support Agency has used the services of Robert Hemphill Interaction Services Ltd. for investigations.

Mr. Burt: I will write to the hon. Member.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many child support accounts involving a person with care claiming family credit have been in arrears at any point; and what amount of maintenance is currently outstanding on such accounts.

Mr. Burt: I will write to the hon. Member.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many of the reduced benefits directions were issued as a result of non-co-operation with the Child Support Agency in which no statement was provided by the parent with care about any risk of harm or undue distress; and in how many of these cases no reason was given for the refusal to authorise or provide information.

Mr. Burt: I will write to the hon. Member.

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many office interviews have been carried out by Child Support Agency local officers; how many of these office interviews have been with persons with care and

how many with absent parents; how many home or other visits have been carried out by local office staff; and how many of the visits are to persons with care and how many to absent parents.

Mr. Burt: I understand from Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive of the Child Support Agency, that the information is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Channon: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) if he will introduce a system of phasing in extra maintenance costs imposed by the Child Support Agency;

(2) at what date assessments by the Child Support Agency become payable; and if he will ensure that some period of grace is allowed to enable those affected to make adequate arrangements to adjust to the new situation.

Mr. Burt: In cases where no court order is in force the effective date of maintenance assessments made by the Child Support Agency is the date the maintenance enquiry form is given or sent to the absent parent. Where a court order is in force the effective date of the child support assessment is two days after the assessment is made.

Arrangements can be made, if necessary, to allow for payment in instalments of arrears that accrue between the date a maintenance inquiry form is issued and the date the absent parent is informed of the amount of his child support maintenance liability.

There are existing provisions for phasing in child support maintenance assessments. These provisions apply where: an absent parent is responsible for maintaining a child or children living with him; there is an existing written maintenance arrangement or court order prior to April 1993; the formula award is less than £60; and the formula award would increase his liability by more than £20. Where these criteria are met, the increase in maintenance payments will be limited to £20 for the first 12 months.

Mr. Channon: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what account is being taken by the Child Support Agency of clean break arrangements between husbands and wives where a proportion of the equity in the family home is handed over by one partner to another; and how this is taken into consideration by the agency in calculating the amount of maintenance payable.

Mr. Burt: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Doncaster, North (Mr. Hughes) on 28 October 1993 at columns *752-53*.

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will make a statement on the success of the Child Support Agency in tracing absent fathers who have not made a divorce or separation settlement.

Mr. Burt: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Bristol, East (Ms Corston) by the chief executive of the Child Support Agency, Ros Hepplewhite, on 4 November 1993.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many persons with care previously on income support are no longer regularly claiming the benefit as a result of a child support maintenance assessment; and how many of these persons with care have had to renew the claim for income support as a result of non-payment of the assessed amount.

Mr. Burt: I understand from Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive of the Child Support Agency, that the information is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will set out the nature of the formula whereby Mrs. Hepplewhite's salary relates to the sums generated by the activities of the Child Support Agency.

Mr. Burt: The Child Support Agency chief executive's entitlement to a performance bonus is largely determined by the achievement of the published performance targets for the new agency taken as a package. The key targets for 1993-94 were set out in my response to the hon. Member for Doncaster, North (Mr. Hughes) on 28 October 1993 at column *753*. They include the arrangement of maintenance for people with the care of children, keeping to the agency's agreed budget and the level of client satisfaction, as well as the achievement of the specified level of benefit savings.

National Insurance

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what would be the effect on Treasury revenue in 1994-95, and in a full year, of *(a)* abolishing the 2 per cent. national insurance contribution, *(b)* raising the lower earnings limit for the level of the personal tax allowance, *(c)* both *(a)* and *(b)* combined, *(d)* raising the national insurance ceiling to £27,145 and *(e)* abolishing the ceiling for national insurance contributions.

Mr. Hague: The information is in the table.

Cost (−)/yield(+) 1994-95 (£ billion)

	In year	*Full year*
(a)	−0·95	−1·05
(b)	−0·55	−0·75
(c)	−1·65	−1·95
(d)	+0·75	+0·7
(e)	+3·15	+3·5

1 The reduction in the full year yield at (d) results from the lag in payment of rebates in respect of personal pensions.

2 The reply at (e) assumes that an upper earnings limit would remain for the purpose of calculating contracted-out rebates.

Maintenance

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish a table showing how many *(a)* maintenance application forms and *(b)* maintenance inquiry forms have been (i) issued and (ii) returned; and how many maintenance assessments have been made, for each month from April to September.

Mr. Burt: I refer the hon. Member to my reply given to the hon. Member for Torridge and West Devon (Miss Nicholson) on 1 November 1993 at column *80*.

Means-tested Benefits

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish figures showing the numbers and percentages of *(a)* families, *(b)* single people without children and *(c)* all claimants receiving one or more means-tested benefit in 1979 and 1993, giving figures separately for claimants and dependants.

Mr. Scott: The information cannot be provided in the precise form requested. Separate figures for dependants are not included as they are not available for all the income-related benefits. Comparable information on the numbers receiving help through income-related rent and rates rebate schemes in 1979 is not available.

Direct comparisons between the figures shown for 1979 and 1992 will be misleading because of dissimilarities in the structure and eligibility rules of the benefits concerned and differences in the availability of information about the numbers in receipt.

The available information is in the table.

Numbers receiving one or more income-related benefit

Thousands

Group	*1979*[1]	*Percentage of total population*[2]	*1992*[3]	*Percentage of total population*[2]
Families	550	8	2,080	30
Single without children	1,977	—	5,179	39
All claimants	2,928	—	8,565	30

[1] In 1979 the only income-related social security benefits were supplementary benefit and family income supplement. Supplementary benefit included additions in respect of rent and rates.

[2] The number of families receiving benefits is shown as a percentage of the total number of child benefit recipients in each year. For 1992 the number of single people without children receiving benefits is shown as a percentage of the total number of single people without children in the population. The number of all benefit claiments is shown as a percentage of the total number of adult couples and single people in the population. Population estimates for single people without children and all families are not available for 1979.

[3] Benefits included are income support, family credit, housing benefit and community charge benefit.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what representations he has received from the National Federation of Housing Associations and the Institute of Housing regarding housing benefit; what reply he will be sending; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Burt: The National Federation of Housing Associations and the Institute of Housing have requested a meeting to discuss housing benefit, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has already replied suggesting that I meet them on his behalf.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security when he expects the results of the review of the provision of housing benefit to be published.

Mr. Burt: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has made clear his objectives for the review of social security expenditure. When proposals are brought forward in due course they will be subject to extensive debate in Parliament and elsewhere.

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the total amount paid in housing benefit to housing association tenants in *(a)* 1990-91, *(b)* 1991-92 and *(c)* at the latest available date.

Mr. Burt: The information is not available.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish a table showing for each housing authority in England the amount of housing benefit paid and the number of recipients, for each financial year from 1982 to date, in respect of *(a)* rent rebates for local authority tenants, *(b)* rent allowances for private and housing association tenants and *(c)* occupants of hostels, with totals for England.

Mr. Burt : I shall write to the hon. Member.

Emphysema

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what measures he will take to ensure that his Department does not refuse industrial disease benefits to miners and former miners suffering from emphysema and similar complaints without a medical examination.

Mr. Scott: Claimants for industrial injuries disablement benefit in respect of a prescribed disease are not normally required to have a medical examination until any other qualifying conditions are satisfied. In the case of the recently prescribed chronic bronchitis and emphysema in coal miners, the criteria to be first satisfied are that the claimant has worked an aggregate of at least 20 years underground in a coal mine, has at least category 1 pneumoconiosis as shown on a chest X-ray, and has a loss of lung function of at least 1 litre below the expected level.

Foreign Claimants

Mr. Dicks: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how much has been spent from public funds to date on individuals living in Britain who were resident in the former Yugoslavia; and if he will make a statement;

(2) how much has been spent from public funds to date on individuals living in Britain who have come from Somalia since 1990; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: This information is not available.

Welfare Rights

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what steps he is taking to ensure guidance and support is given to the work of agencies concerned with welfare rights.

Mr. Scott: This Department, and its agencies, liaises closely with customer representative groups, including those concerned with welfare rights, to foster good relations and ensure their information needs are met. We also regularly consult these groups so that their views can influence future service planning.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Council

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will outline the means by which the membership of the board of the British Council is determined.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The council's royal charter of incorporation provides for up to 30 board members, to be

elected by the board except for up to five to be co-opted by the board and two to be nominated by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of British Council expenditure is allocated towards promoting *(a)* British and *(b)* Welsh culture abroad.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: There is no fixed proportion allocated to individual regions but every care is taken to ensure that the British Council's programme of expenditure in all fields properly reflects Britain's various distinct cultural identities. A substantial proportion of the overseas students placed in the United Kingdom by the council attend the university of Wales. There will be a "Study in Wales" stand at the Dubai education and training exhibition in January, and shortly forthcoming council publications include "Higher Education: Study and Research in Wales". The recent Welsh arts week in Stuttgart and Welsh art delegation to Baden-Wurttemberg were both highly successful; and a Welsh arts festival in Catalonia is under discussion for 1995.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will outline the measures taken in organisational and budgetary terms to ensure that any promotional expenditure by the British Council abroad takes into account the distinct cultural identities of Scotland and Wales.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The British Council has Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland committees, made up of leading academic and cultural personalities from those regions, that meet regularly to consider the quantity and quality of regional content in the council's programmes. For the same reason, the composition of the council's subject advisory committees—on the arts and different academic disciplines—also reflects proper regional representation, as does the council's main board. The council maintains full regional offices in Cardiff, Belfast and Scotland.

Peru

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the state of diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom Government and Peru; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: We enjoy good relations with Peru.

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on human rights in Peru.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: We welcome the recent reduction in human rights violations in Peru. The Peruvian authorities are well aware of the concern felt in this country about the need to reduce abuses still further and to bring to justice those responsible.

Immigration (DNA Tests)

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many persons have undergone DNA tests in connection with immigration at the most recent date and how many have proven positive on *(a)* Merseyside, *(b)* Liverpool and *(c)* England and Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The total number of children tested under the Government DNA scheme at the end of 1992 was 2,955. Eighty per cent. of those tested were shown to be related as claimed to both parents. Data about the geographical location of sponsors in the United Kingdom are not held centrally.

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many persons were awaiting DNA tests in connection with immigration matters in *(a)* Liverpool, *(b)* on Merseyside and *(c)* in England and Wales at the most recent date.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

China

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of China to dissuade them from conducting an underground nuclear test.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: None.

Lot Airlines

Mr. Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact on United Kingdom-Polish relations of the suspension of the permit for Lot Airlines to land at Heathrow.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: I am naturally concerned at the suspension of air services between Britain and Poland. This is in neither country's interests. It is essentially a matter for resolution between the two airlines. We are making every effort however to help secure a settlement to this commercial dispute under the terms of the existing air services agreement.

Nuclear Non-proliferation

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Germany concerning the extension of the non-proliferation treaty in 1995; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have discussed this subject with the German Government both bilaterally and in multilateral fora. In a statement given to the United Nations general assembly on 1 November, member states of the European Union affirmed their support for the unconditional and indefinite extension of the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in 1995.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had wih his European Community counterparts concerning the extension of the non-proliferation treaty in 1995.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We regularly have discussions with our partners on this subject both bilaterally and in multilateral fora. In a statement given to the United Nations general assembly on 1 November, member states of the European Union affirmed their support for the unconditional and indefinite extension of the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

UNESCO

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the factors other than finance preventing United Kingdom membership of UNESCO.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: As I made clear in my evidence on UNESCO to the Foreign Affairs Committee on 7 July, we recognise and welcome the progress which the organisation has taken towards reform since we left in 1985. But UNESCO still lacks a coherent policy on decentralisation and needs to present a focused approach drawing together the strands of its broad mandate. But we have to take into account the financial constraints we face and the other demands on our resources when reviewing any decision if and when to rejoin UNESCO.

Trans-Caucasus Region

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what diplomatic efforts Her Majesty's Government are making through the UN and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to mediate between the warring factions in the trans-Caucasus region.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Both bilaterally, and at the UN and with our EC and Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe partners we have consistently deplored the fighting in the Trans-Caucasus. We have supported UN Security Council resolutions calling for ceasefires and the resolution of the conflicts in Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh through peaceful negotiations. We have also supported the deployment of UN monitors in Abkhazia.

The CSCE has taken the lead in the search for a settlement in South Ossetia and, through the Minsk group, has put forward a plan for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. We are now actively considering joining the Minsk group.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reasons underlay his decision to refuse permission to Ms Vanessa Redgrave, Mr. Jeremy Irons and Mr. Daniel Day-Lewis to travel on the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees airlift to Sarajevo on 22 October.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The decision not to permit the party of eight, including Ms Redgrave, Mr. Jeremy Irons and Mr. Daniel Day-Lewis, to travel on the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' airlift was made by UNHCR air operations cell, Geneva in line with its policy guidelines drawn up in conjunction with UNPROFOR.

GATT

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Minister for Overseas Development will arrange a meeting with the Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Environmental Alliance to discuss the proposed multilateral trade organisation and GATT.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The negotiations on the GATT Uruguay round, including the question of the proposed multilateral trade organisation, are primarily a matter for the Department of Trade and Industry. I understand that officials have regular contact with representatives of the Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Environmental Alliance.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements have been made to provide all hon. Members with a copy of the general agreement on tariffs and trade and a briefing on progress made in the Uruguay round of the GATT negotiations.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Copies of the general agreement on tariffs and trade are available in the Library of the House. Hon. Members have received frequent briefings on progress made in the Uruguay round negotiations: for example, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has referred to the Uruguay round in reports to the House on the outcome of the Tokyo summit in July and of the recent Brussels European summit. And my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs has reported similarly to the House on discussions in the Foreign Affairs Council. It is open to hon. Members to request further information from appropriate Ministers at any time.

European Parliament Committees

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the policy of Her Majesty's Government to monitor, read and respond to reports of the committees of the European Parliament where they *(a)* deal with United Kingdom matters or *(b)* are referred to the member state Governments of the European Community.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: We follow the proceedings of committees of the European Parliament and take note of resolutions which the Parliament adopts after considering committees' reports, particularly where these concern United Kingdom matters or where they relate to the legislative process.

Overseas Domestic Workers

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. pursuant to his answer of 6 May, *Official Report,* column *181,* if he will now make it his practice to keep records of the number of leaflets concerning domestic servants travelling to the United Kingdom.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: No. It would not be practicable to keep records of the number of such leaflets issued.

Association of South-East Asian Nations

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who represented Hong Kong at the special Association of South-East Asian Nations—ASEAN—meeting in Tokyo on 25 to 27 October on export control and regional security; what was the outcome of the meeting; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Goodlad: Four officers from the trade department and the Customs and Excise department of the Hong Kong Government attended the Asian security export control

seminar held in Tokyo on 25 to 27 October. Apart from Japan, which hosted the seminar, Australia, Brunei, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Phillipines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and the United States were represented at the seminar. The seminar provided a useful forum for exchanging views on export control regimes. There was no discussion of specific regional security issues at this meeting.

EC Committee of the Regions

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what were the criteria for determining *(a)* the political and *(b)* the geographical balance of membership on the EC Committee of the Regions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Heatcoat-Amory: In selecting nominees, we took account of the provision in the EC (Amendment) Act 1993 that all nominees should be elected members of local authorities; the relative strengths of the political parties in local government and the desirability of ensuring a broad spread of political opinion from each part of the United Kingdom; the views of the local authority associations and of the political parties; the need for an equitable distribution of seats between the four parts of the United Kingdom; the personal qualities that members and alternative members will need.

Nuclear Testing

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans the Government have to declare a moratorium on the United Kingdom's nuclear testing programme.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: We have no such plans, but we have made it clear that we will carry out no nuclear tests while the United States moratorium continues.

Western Shoshone Indian Nation

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response he made to the recent request by members of the Western Shoshone Indian nation to meet him during their visit to London.

Mr. Goodlad: We have explained that, as our respective positions on the issues of concern to them are well known, we saw little to be gained by a meeting.

Rhinoceros Horns

Mr. Etherington: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what immediate steps are being taken by the Governor of Hong Kong to ensure that Hong Kong enforces its own compliance with the CITES regulations to ban trade in *(a)* rhinoceros horn and *(b)* rhinoceros horn products and to dispose of stocks of rhinoceros horn.

Mr. Goodlad: Hong Kong has strict legislation governing the implementation of CITES and is fully committed to rigorous enforcement of its provisions.

Acting on information from the Environmental Investigation Agency—EIA—and other sources, the Agriculture and Fisheries Department of the Hong Kong Government raided five medicine shops on 21 October and another 24 on 22 October. Suspected rhino hide was seized from two shops, together with a number of packets of medicine claiming to contain rhino ingredients. This series of raids will continue until all the pharmacies identified by the EIA as having rhino products available have been searched.

Bosnia

Mr. Madden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many applications for visas to study in the United Kingdom have been made by people who originate from Bosnia this year, to date; and how many such applications *(a)* have been granted, *(b)* have been refused and *(c)* are awaiting decisions.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: There is no British Mission in Bosnia. Statistics on visa applications made at other posts are not centrally recorded according to nationality and purpose of visit and could not be provided except at disproportionate cost.

Russia (Seals)

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will provide figures for the number of seals killed in Russia for *(a)* 1992 and *(b)* 1993; and if they were adults or pups.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The Russian authorities have informed us that 18,183 harp seal pups were caught in the White sea in 1992, and 19,925 in 1993. A total of 467 harp seal pups and 500 hooded seal pups were caught in the Greenland sea in 1992 for research purposes. No hunting was conducted in the Greenland sea in 1993. We await information from the Russian authorities about the number of adult seals taken, and I will write to the hon. Member when this has been received.

Turkey

Mr. Austin-Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures he will take to encourage Turkey's adherence to the Copenhagen declaration of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe on minority rights.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: On behalf of the European Community and its member states, the United Kingdom raised the issue of Turkey's compliance with its CSCE commitments at the human dimension implementation meeting in Warsaw from 27 September to 15 October. We will be prepared to take similar action in the future.

Mr. Austin-Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will instruct the British ambassador in Ankara to send an official to the Kurdish region to obtain first hand information on the alleged bombardment and depopulation of villages by Turkish armed forces.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Officials from the British embassy make regular visits to the region as conditions permit. The ambassador was there himself in April. The embassy receives information from a range of contacts in human rights organisations in the region.

Mr. Soley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he will make representations to Turkey concerning the recent massacre in the Kurdish town of Lice.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The details of the incident in Lice at the end of October are still unclear. The Turkish authorities are aware of the importance we attach to the rule of law and respect for human rights.

We are increasingly concerned by escalating violence in south-east Turkey and by allegations of human rights abuses there by both sides in the conflict.

Mr. Austin-Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will request the United Nations Secretary General to appoint a special rapporteur to investigate the alleged abuse of human rights, violent depopulation of villages and killings of civilians by Turkish armed forces.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: If proposals were made by the appropriate United Nations human rights bodies, we would study them carefully on their merit.

Slovakia

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when Her Majesty's Government intend to appoint an ambassador to Slovakia.

Mr. Hogg: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave to the hon. Member for Liverpool, West Derby (Mr. Wareing) on 19 July 1993, *Official Report*, columns *21-22*.

St. Helena

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to visit St. Helena; and if he will make a statement concerning the changes envisaged in the procedures adopted for St. Helenians visiting and working in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no plans to visit St. Helena. Officials from the FCO, Home Office and Department of Employment are discussing the work permit question with a view to establishing how best the Government can meet the employment aspirations of the St. Helenians wishing to come to the United Kingdom following the decision to phase out by 1995 the dependent territories work permit quota scheme to which St. Helenians had access.

The Government are looking in particular at how St. Helenians might benefit from the training and work experience scheme administered by the Department of Employment.

Kashmir

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken to urge the Indian Government to lift the siege of the mosque at Hazratbal, Kashmir.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs discussed the situation at the Hazratbal mosque with Dr. Manmohan Singh, head of the Indian delegation to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Cyprus on 21 October. We welcome the restraint so far displayed by the Indian Government in their efforts to resolve the situation.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Indian Government concerning the outstanding United Nations resolutions on Kashmir.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I have regularly discussed the situation in Kashmir with the Indian Government. Neither India nor Pakistan fully implemented the resolutions of 1948 and 1949, which Britain supported and they have to some extent been overtaken by events. We believe the Kashmir dispute can ultimately be solved only by peaceful agreement between India and Pakistan as provided for under the 1972 Simla agreement. We have urged both countries to resume their bilateral dialogue.

Uganda

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what has been the total financial help given by Her Majesty's Government to Uganda in each of the last three years.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Gross public expenditure on aid to Uganda was as follows:

Year	*£ million*
1990-91	32·2
1991-92	27·0
1992-93	[1]34·5

[1] Provisional.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions he has held with the Ugandan Government about the implications of section 40 of the Uganda Police Bill for the fairness of the forthcoming parliamentary elections;

(2) what discussions Her Majesty's Government have had on the Ugandan constitutional assembly statute 1993 to ensure the rights and interests of all political parties who may wish to contest the forthcoming parliamentary elections; and if he will make a statement;

(3) what discussion he has had with the Ugandan Government to ensure that there will be a free and fair allocation of media availability to all political parties contesting the forthcoming parliamentary elections;

(4) which Ugandan political parties were allowed to take part in discussions on the proposed new constitution.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We and our European partners have had extensive discussions on forthcoming elections to the constituent assembly, which will decide the constitutional future of Uganda.

President Museveni has given assurances that members of all political parties will be allowed to stand in their own right for the election to the Assembly. He has suspended politicisation courses in the run-up to the election, reminded directors of the national resistance movement and district administrators that they must not make pronouncements against political parties, emphasised the independence of the Electoral Commission and directed that free access to radio and television be made available to spokesmen of political parties as well as advocates of the no-party—movement—system. All parties have had the opportunity to present evidence to the constitutional commission on the proposed constitution.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the British Government propose to take to ensure that there are observer groups from the United Kingdom observing the forthcoming Ugandan parliamentary elections.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: While President Museveni has said he would have no objection to international observers being present at the forthcoming elections to the constituent assembly, there are currently no plans to send observers from the United Kingdom.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much money has been allocated to Uganda for the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We have agreed to meet the cost of ballot papers and training for some electoral officials. Costs will not be known until contracts have been signed. In addition, we have paid for one representative of each of the main political parties to visit London in order to see how Parliament functions, at a cost of approximately £10,000.

Population Control, China

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when officials at the British Embassy in Peking last visited the Chinese Family Planning Association to observe and inspect their work.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Members of the British embassy in Peking have regular contact with Chinese officials working in family planning. Their main point of contact is the State Family Planning Commission, which is the organisation responsible for policy making.

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library copies of the material provided to his Department by the International Planned Parenthood Foundation and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities concerning their budgets and programmes in China.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The IPPF and UNFPA are happy for all published materials, including budget and programme information, on their work overseas to be placed in the Library. Officials from the Overseas Development Administration will arrange for this to be done.

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when officials at the British embassy in Peking last inspected the effects of Chinese population control policies at district and factory level.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The British embassy monitors China's family planning programme through a range of contracts within and outside China. These enable us to assess the effects of policies at the local level.

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action his Department's representatives on the IPPF annual donors meeting took with regard to the Chinese mass sterilisation campaign.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The IPPF annual donors meeting takes place in mid-November. Officials from the Overseas Development Administration will attend and discuss the role of national family planning associations in a number of countries—including China—with IPPF officials and other donors.

Mr. Alton Liverpool, Mossley Hill): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when officials at the British embassy in Peking last visited the Chinese State Family Planning Commission to observe and inspect its work.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Members of the British embassy in Peking last visited the Chinese Government's State Family Planning Commission on 29 October. On 14 October, they had informal discussions with an official responsible for family planning work.

Family Planning

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, by what dates he expects to decide the level of United Kingdom contributions to the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities for 1994-95.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The planned level of United Kingdom contributions to the IPPF and UNFPA for 1994-95 will be set early next year.

Campaign Free Tibet

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to meet the representatives of Campaign Free Tibet to discuss the contents of their publication "Children of Despair", a copy of which has been sent to him.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no present plans to meet representatives of Campaign Free Tibet. The Government received copies of the report "Children of Despair" in August 1992 and its contents have been taken into account in the formulation of our policies in respect of Tibet and human rights.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response he has made to statements from the World Health Organisation office in Belgrade complaining of a severe shortage of medical supplies; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Sanctions applied to Serbia and Montenegro under UN Security Council resolutions 757 and 820 specifically exclude foods and medicines subject to notification procedures in the United Nations sanctions committee. We have worked hard in this committee to ensure that genuine humanitarian shipments are expedited.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what diplomatic efforts Her Majesty's Government is making to persuade other members of the Security Council to increase their funding of UN appeals in former Yugoslavia and the trans-Caucus region.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We keep in regular touch with major donors, including those which are Security Council members, on the progress of UN appeals and constantly encourage UN bodies to look for new donors.

Humanitarian Aid

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what plans he has to increase Her Majesty's Government's contribution to UN appeals in *(a)* former Yugoslavia, *(b)* Armenia, *(c)* Azerbaijan and *(d)* Georgia;

(2) what contribution Her Majesty's Government is making to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' winter relief programme in former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We continuously monitor the humanitarian requirements of these and other areas of great need. We have no immediate plans to contribute further to the UN appeals listed, but we have thus far provided humanitarian aid for Armenia totalling £270,000; for Azerbaijan £1,270,000 and for Georgia £700,000.

For the former Yugoslavia where we are the second biggest contributor to UNHCR's programme, our financial commitments now total £152·5 million. This includes our share of a new EC pledge of 89 million ecu—£68 million —announced last week.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussion he has had with the Ugandan Government as to the preparation of the electoral registers for the forthcoming general election in Uganda; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what discussion he will have with the Ugandan Government as to the allocation and supervision of polling stations to be used in the forthcoming Ugandan parliamentary elections.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Along with other donors, we have regular discussions with the Ugandan authorities on the preparations being made for the forthcoming constituent assembly elections. Electoral experts from the United Nations Development Programme have been providing the Ugandans with advice on the preparations for the elections.

Angola

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is his policy towards the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 834 relating to Angola.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: United Nations Security Council resolution 834 was superseded by resolutions 851 and 864. We strongly support all these resolutions. UNSCR 864 provides for an embargo on the supply of arms and fuel to UNITA which took effect on 25 September. We have implemented the embargo.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a further statement on United Kingdom policy towards Angola.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave the hon. Member for Coventry, North-East (Mr. Ainsworth) on 3 November at column 331.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a further statement on his policy towards UNITA in the light of UNITA's unilaterally declared ceasefire.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We welcome UNITA's unilateral ceasefire offer which I understand has now been matched by the Government of Angola. We are encouraged by UNITA's stated readiness in principle to withdraw from the territory which it has occupied since October 1992, following the recent talks under United Nations auspices in Lusaka. UNITA must now match its words with deeds. We urge it to comply fully with the relevant Security Council resolutions. We hope it will not be necessary to implement the extra measures envisaged in United Nations Security Council resolution 864.

Israel (Arab Trade Boycott)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department *(a)* has done and *(b)* intends to do in ensuring the Arab states maintain their commitment to abandon the Arab trade boycott of Israel.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Under the United Kingdom presidency, the EC initiated a demarche to Arab states urging them to lift the boycott. We continue to urge then to do so.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Bilateral Aid Projects

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the bilateral aid projects commenced in the last 12 months.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: It is provisionally estimated that in 1992-93 the bilateral programmes of assistance to developing countries and central eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that could be allocated by region totalled £1,012·7 million. Of this, £386·2 million was spent in Africa, £311·2 million in Asia and £48·6 million in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Of £584·6 million of bilateral assistance allocable by sector, £105·6 million was spent on education and £48·9 million on health.

The development assistance committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has acknowledged our aid programme for its effectiveness and for being directed to those countries most in need. Over 80 per cent. of our bilateral aid to developing countries, allocable by income category, goes to the poorest countries—those whose 1991 GNP per capita was less than $765. We press the multilateral institutions of which we are member to undertake a continuing search for more effective ways of doing business.

I shall write to my hon. Friend with further information.

Education Projects

Mr. Geoffrey Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what was the breakdown of spending on education projects within the ODA in the year 1991-92; how much of the total was allocated to basic education for children and literacy for adults; and how much was allocated for a secondary and tertiary education, buildings and other services to education beyond the basic level.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Total ODA spending on education projects in developing countries during 1991-92 amounted to just under £115 million. This figure, which includes all project aid and technical co-operation as well as Commonwealth Development Corporation project aid in this sector, is broken down as follows:

Project aid expenditure on education sector 1991-92

Sector	*(£000)*
Adult Education	1,462
Primary Education	5,432
Secondary Education	8,656
Higher Education	34,362

Sector	(£000)
Technical and Vocational Education	1,473
Nursery Schools	601
Research/Scientific Institutions	722
Other Education	62,037
Natural Sciences	14
Total	114,759

Bosnia

Mr. Madden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when all necessary and ordered winter supplies will be delivered to Bosnia, with particular reference to temporary shelter ordered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; what supplies await delivery to Bosnia; and what arrangements are being made to expedite the arrival of ordered winter supplies.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The UNHCR issued on 2 November a progress report on the winterization programme in the former Yugoslavia, copies of which have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

We are working closely with the UNHCR and other United Nations agencies. We have so far committed £152·5 million including our share of EC aid. We are financing shelter, road convoys, the restoration of coal and electricity supplies, medical help and food. We are supporting the United Nation's strong representations to the warring factions to stop obstructing these vital humanitarian supplies. We are a major contributor to the airlift to Sarajevo.

INDEX TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

SIXTH SERIES **VOLUME 231**

SESSION 1992–93

1st November, 1993—5th November, 1993

SCOPE OF THE INDEX, ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS

This index is derived from the House of Commons Library's Parliamentary On-Line Information System (POLIS), and the subject terms used are based on those used in POLIS. There are often changes in column numbering, etc, between the daily part or weekly Hansard (which simply collects together the daily parts without revision) and the bound volume. The index for the bound volume is revised to take account of these changes and cannot therefore, be used in connection with the daily part or weekly Hansard. For these versions use the Fortnightly Index.

Scope and arrangement of the Index

Oral and Written Parliamentary Questions are indexed under subject headings and the names of Members asking and Ministers replying to them. Questions are not listed under the names of Departments replying. Departmental listings can be arrived at indirectly by looking under the names of the Minister(s) of that Department. There are, however, the headings 'Northern Ireland', 'Scotland', and 'Wales' under which one can find not only most Questions answered by the Northern Ireland Office, Scottish Office, Welsh Office but also Questions about these areas of the United Kingdom which are answered by other Departments. Ministerial statements are indexed under subject headings, under 'Ministerial statements' and the names of Ministers making them and Members speaking on them. General debates are indexed under broad subject headings and under the names of all Members and Ministers taking part. Debates on legislation (Bills, Orders, Regulations etc.) are indexed under the name of the Bill, Statutory Instrument etc, under subject headings and under the names of those taking part.

Rulings and Statements by Speaker and deputies are brought together under the heading Speaker's rulings and statements.

Other contributions by Speaker and deputies appear under the heading Speaker.

Opposition Day Debates, Estimates Day Debates and Standing Order No. 10 applications are listed under those respective headings and under subject headings too.

The date of each item except Parliamentary Questions is inserted immediately before the reference.

Members' names are given in the form by which they prefer to be known and are printed in bold italics. Under their names, entries are arranged under one of the two headings *Debates etc* (to include interventions on statements, points of order and so on) or *Questions*.

Abbreviations

Bills 1R=first reading, 2R=second reading, Money res=money resolution, Com=Committee stage, Rep=Report stage, 3R=third reading, amendt/amendts=amendment/amendments, *=matter taken formally, without debate.

Column numbers followed by the letter W refer to Written Questions. These appear at the end of each daily part or volume with their own sequence of column numbers printed in italics.

A1
225w
Road construction 225-6w
Speed limits 449w

A1-M1 link
Road construction 338w

A5
225-6w
Road works 49w

A8
Road traffic 262w

A12
Road construction 225-6w

A27
342w

A38
Road works 12w

A369
Road works 231w

Absent parents
78-80w, 390w, 583-5w

Access to countryside
Forests 152w

Access to work programme
70-2w

Accounting
21w
Training & enterprise councils 581w
VAT 462-3w

Acute beds
Llandudno General Hospital 333w

Adams, Gerard
(01:11:93) 19-37

Adams, Mrs Irene
Questions
VAT, Energy prices 514

Additional voluntary contributions
(04:11:93) 542-53

Administration of justice
Crown courts 317-8w
Magistrates' courts 318w
Young offenders 375-6w

Administrative costs
Arts Council 200-2w
Social Fund 83w
Social security 82-3w
Taxation 561w

Adoption
511
Maternity payments 194w
Ministerial statements (03:11:93) 343-55

Adoption agencies
(03:11:93) 343-55

Adoption panels
(03:11:93) 343-55

"Adoption White Paper"
(03:11:93) 343-55

Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit
147w

Advertising
Dept for Education 397w

Advisory bodies
Social security 592w

Aerosols
Air pollution control 204w, 352w

Aerospace industry
Government assistance to industry 234-6w

Age
Magistrates 14-5

Age discrimination
435w

Agricultural development programme
Northern Ireland 42w

Agricultural land
509w

Agricultural production
Wheat 314-6

Agricultural subsidies
Expenditure 507w
Organic farming 507-8w
Pigs 508w

Agricultural Wages Board
Inspections 106w
Manpower 106w

Agriculture
Census 449w
Scotland 449w

Agri-environment action plan
507-8w

Aid financed trade
Malaysia 239w

AIDS
Hospital patients 220w
Newcastle General Hospital 220w

Ainger, Mr Nick
Questions
Bridges, Estuaries 334w, 340-1w, 448w
Income, Dyfed 11-2

Ainsworth, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 536
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 365

Ainsworth, Mr Robert
Questions
Angola, Armed conflict 333-4
George Eliot Hospital Nuneaton, Hospital waiting lists 211w
Languages education, Ethnic minorities 146
Motor vehicle theft, Crime prevention 365w
Patient's Charter, Mental patients 534w
Regional health authorities, Finance 533-4w
Transport supplementary grants 226-31w

Air accidents
Harrier aircraft 288-9w
Jet aircraft 9-10w
Low flying 66-7w, 288-9w
Military aircraft 287w
RAF Fairford 290w
Tornado aircraft 131w, 287w

Air displays
Low flying 66w
RAF Fairford 66-7w

Air fares
VAT 560w

Air force
Armed forces deployment 300w
Armed forces training 477w
Military exercises 125w

Air force bases
Malaysia 295w

Air pollution
Carbon dioxide 94w
Forests 331w

Air pollution control
Aerosols 204w, 352w
Carbon dioxide 94-5w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons 489w
Ince B power station 2-3w
Local government functions 207w
Nuclear power 94-5w
Orimulsion 3w
Richborough power station 2-3w

Air routes
Highlands of Scotland 284w
USA 521w

Air safety
Low flying 127-8w

Air traffic control
Low flying 65-6w, 128w, 284-5w

Air transport
Poland 342-3w, 594w

Aircraft noise
Low flying 66w
Military aircraft 130-1w

Aircrew
Licensing 9w

Airlines
Licensing 343-4w

Airmisses
Military aircraft 288w

Airships
Defence procurement 286w

***Aitken, Mr Jonathan**, Minister of State for Defence Procurement*
Questions
Air force bases, Malaysia 295w
Ammunition, Uranium 476w
Armed forces civilians 472-3w
Arms exports 474w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry 526w
Arms trade, Brunei 295w
Arms trade, Malaysia 295w
Atomic Weapons Establishment, Safety 474w
AWE Aldermaston, Buildings 64w
AWE Aldermaston, Radioactive waste disposal 64-5w, 124-5w, 526w
AWE Aldermaston, Repairs & maintenance 526w
British Aerospace, Information technology 297-8w
Challenger tanks, Defence procurement 131w
Civil service retirement, Re-employment 293w
Defence, France 524w
Defence contracts 296-7w
Defence contracts, Jordan 295-6w
Defence procurement 300w
Defence procurement, Austria 300w
Defence research, Small businesses 297w
Devonport dockyard, Privatisation 132w
European fighter aircraft, Computer software 67w, 297w
GEC 298w
GEC, Ferranti 298w
Hashemi, Mohammed 525w
International Military Services 294w
Minesweepers, Arms trade 67w
Ministerial speeches 524w
Ministry of Defence, Civil servants 133w
Ministry of Defence, Government buildings 524-5w
Ministry of Defence, Next steps initiative 124w
Nuclear weapons tests 298w
Project Al Yamamah 295w
Radioactive waste disposal 125w
SA80 rifle 472w
Victor aircraft, Arms trade 67w

Alcoholic drinks duties
21w
Beer 464-5w
Tax evasion 465w, 554w
Tax yields 551-2w

***Alison, Rt Hon Michael**, Second Church Estates Commissioner*
Questions
Bishops, Pay 12-3
Church Commissioners, Expenditure 13
Church Commissioners, Investment 44-5w
Church Commissioners, Sunday trading 13
Church property, Land use 45w
Church property, Terrorism 45w
Clergy, Pensions 45w

All party groups
86w

Allason, Mr Rupert
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 352
Questions
Bristow, Desmond 90-1w

Allason, Mr Rupert—continued
Bristow, Desmond, Publications 480w
Nazi war crimes, Prosecutions 315-6w

Allen, Mr Graham
Questions
Accounting 21w
All party groups 86w
Dept of the Serjeant at Arms, International conferences 86w
House of Commons, Cost effectiveness 86w
House of Commons accommodation 86w
House of Commons accommodation, Members' facilities 362w
House of Commons annunciator system 197w
House of Commons broadcasting 360-1w
House of Commons broadcasting, Members' facilities 439w
House of Commons times of sittings 361w
House of Lords 480w
Ibbs Report 85w
Lords amendments 497-8w
Members, Training 199-200w
Members, Word processors 198w
Members' facilities 199w
Members' visits abroad, EC institutions 362w
Order paper 198-9w
Overseas workers, Domestic service 562-3w, 596w
Palace of Westminster, Gun sports 199w
Parliamentary data & video network 197-8w
POLIS, House of Commons questions 198w
Public footpaths, Rannoch Moor 447w
Vote bundle 198w
Vote bundle, Costs 85w

Alton, Mr David
Questions
"Children of Despair" 602w
China, Family planning 601-2w
EC grants & loans, Merseyside 234w
Fine defaulters, Prison population 365w
Human rights, Vietnam 56w
Imitation guns 179w
International Planned Parenthood Federation, UK contributions 602w
Peru, Overseas aid 27w
Prisoners, Crime 363w

Alzheimer's disease
Wales 50w

Ambulance services
Antrim Hospital 355w
Manpower 221-2w
Scotland 451w

Amess, Mr David
Debates etc.
Football Matches (Violent & Disorderly Conduct) Bill, 1R (03:11:93) 371-3
Post offices, Pitsea (02:11:93) 317-20

Amkor Anam Europe
Regional selective assistance 241w

Ammunition
Uranium 476w

Amoxycillin
Prescriptions 59w

Ancient monuments
Architectural conservation 134w, 151-2w
Northern Ireland 134w
Scotland 151-2w

***Ancram, Mr Michael**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office*
Questions
Agricultural development programme, Northern Ireland 42w
Antrim Hospital, Ambulance services 355w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Northern Ireland 135w
Children, Migration 499w
Community relations, Northern Ireland 355w
Farm incomes, Marginal land 43-4w
Hill livestock allowances, Northern Ireland 42-4w
Hospital consultants, Merit awards 500w
Integrated schools, Northern Ireland 353-4w

Ancram, Mr Michael—continued
Maternity services, Northern Ireland 42w
Mental health community care, Northern Ireland 356w
Northern Ireland Health & Social Services Boards, Public appointments 498-9w
Psychiatric nurses, Northern Ireland 498w
Respite care, Northern Ireland 497w
Sheep premiums, Northern Ireland 44w
Suicide, Mental patients 501w

Anderson, Mr Donald
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 124-5
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 382, 385-6
Questions
Building industry, Wales 8

Anderson, Ms Janet
Questions
Fire services, Finance 175-8w
Nursing homes, Closures 168w
Social security reciprocal agreements, Australia 81w

Anglo-French Nuclear Cooperation Council
see Franco-British Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy & Doctrine

Anglo-Irish talks
134w, 513

Angola
Armed conflict 333-5; 603w
Arms embargoes 603w
Overseas aid 239w
Peace negotiations 603w

Animal welfare
Poultry 252-3w
Transport of animals 508w

Anorexia
Medical research 451w

Anthrax
South Wales 511w

Antrim Hospital
Ambulance services 355w

Arab boycott
Israel 329

Arable area payments scheme
509w
EC countries 448-9w
Scotland 528-9w

Arafat, Yasser
332

Archaeological sites
Theft 8w

Architectural conservation
Ancient monuments 134w, 151-2w

Argyll & Clyde Health Board
(01:11:93) 126-32, 440-6w

Armed conflict
Angola 333-5, 603w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 276-7w, 301-2w
Sarajevo 301w
Yugoslavia 302-3w

Armed forces
Redundancy pay 293w
Vaccination 475w

Armed forces casualties
Iraq-Kuwait conflict 526w

Armed forces civilians
472-3w
Contracts for services 133w

Armed forces dependants
Maintenance 132w

Armed forces deployment
477w
Air force 300w

Armed forces deployment—continued
Belize 336, 472w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 476w
Military aircraft 285-6w
RAF Lossiemouth 287w

Armed forces discharges
Pregnancy 478w

Armed forces housing
290w
Construction 132-3w
Property transfer 525w

Armed forces married quarters
Pirbright 294w

Armed forces punishment
World War I 472w

Armed forces strength
Civil service manpower 291w

Armed forces training
Air force 477w
Paraguay 132w

Armenia
Sanctions 303-4w

Arms embargoes
Angola 603w

Arms exports
474w
Iraq 279w
Mines 513w

Arms to Iraq Inquiry
526w
Disclosure of information 301w

Arms trade
Brunei 295w
Malaysia 295w
Minesweepers 67w
Victor aircraft 67w

Armstrong, Ms Hilary
Debates etc.
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 603, 611
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 281
Questions
Schools, Inspections 148w
Youth services, Government grants to voluntary organisations 379w

Arnold, Mr Jacques
Questions
Dept of Social Security, Cash limits 81w
Grant maintained schools 137w
Teachers, Vacancies 494-5w
Urban Regeneration Agency 328w

Arnold, Sir Thomas
Questions
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit 147w
Literacy Education & Training 21w
Tourist information, Egypt 27-8w

Arrests
Belgium 327-8

Art works
Brodsworth Hall 308w

Arts Council
201w
Administrative costs 200-2w
Public appointments 23w

Arts Council grants
Manpower 201w
Orchestras 23-4w, 98w

Arts finance
Greater London 200w

Asbestos
Public Record Office 292w
School buildings 494w

Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 25
Questions
Northern Ireland 512

Ashton, Mr Joseph
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 413

Aspinwall, Mr Jack
Questions
Gypsies, Avon 487w
Travelling people, Caravan sites 486w

Associated British Ports
(03:11:93) 374-418

Association of South East Asian Nations
Export controls 596-7w

AST Training
105w

Atkins, Mr Robert, Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office
Questions
A8, Road traffic 262w
Ancient monuments, Architectural conservation 134w
Building industry, Northern Ireland 264w
Day care of children, Northern Ireland 356-7w
Enterprise Ulster 500w
Ferries, Portaferry 500w
Fire regulations, Government buildings 134w
Industrial development, Northern Ireland 354w
Radiation hazards, Northern Ireland 499-500w
Road construction, Northern Ireland 134w
Unemployment, Northern Ireland 135w, 262-3w

Atkinson, Mr David
Questions
Anorexia, Medical research 451w
Diabetes, Health service staff 215w
European Convention on Human Rights 87w
Lung diseases, Medical equipment 215w
Osteoporosis 213w
Regional health authorities, NHS administration 217w
Russia, Elections 30w
Suicide 182-3w, 236w
Suicide, Government grants to voluntary organisations 215w
Summertime 363w
Unemployment benefits, Social Security benefits rules 265-6w

Atomic Weapons Establishment
Safety 474w

Audio recordings
Counterfeit manufacturing 233-4w

Audit
Grant maintained schools 283w

Audit Commission for Local Authorities in England & Wales
283w

Austin-Walker, Mr John
Questions
Severe disablement allowance, Women 83-4w
Turkey, Human rights 275w
Turkey, Kurds 598-9w
VAT, Publications 461-2w

Australia
Social security reciprocal agreements 81w

Austria
Defence procurement 300w

Authorised investigators
Codes of practice 359w
Northern Ireland 359w

Average earnings
House prices 466w

Avon
Gypsies 487w
Local government reform 4-5w
Travelling people 486w

AWE Aldermaston
Buildings 64w
Radioactive waste disposal 64-5w, 124-5w, 526w

AWE Aldermaston—continued
Repairs & maintenance 64w, 526w

Ayrshire
Employment opportunities 240w

Ayrshire & Arran Health Board
440-6w
Urology 528w

Baby care units
455w

Badgers
Bovine tuberculosis 314w
Pest control 252w

Bailiffs
Child Support Agency 196w

Baker, Rt Hon Kenneth
Questions
Gatwick Airport 523-4w
Schengen Agreement 182w

Balance of trade
507-8
St Helena 514w

Baldry, Mr Tony, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of the Environment
Debates etc.
Elephants (03:11:93) 493-8
Waste disposal, Letchworth (04:11:93) 621-4
Questions
Building regulations, Local government functions 326w
Community charge grant 324w
Council housing, Capital investment 320w
Council tax, Barnet 204w
Council tax, Valuation tribunals 323w
Departmental correspondence, Bolton 482w
Electrical safety, Safety standards 353w
Gypsies, Avon 487w
Hams Hall power station, Planning permission 101w
Housing construction, Tyne & Wear 206w
Local government reform 204w, 485w
Local government reform, Avon 4-5w
Local government reform, North Yorkshire 4w
Local government revenue 102w, 324w, 487-8w
Local government services 203w
Local government services, Legal profession 328-9w
Manchester City Council, Franchising 208w
Planning permission, Opencast mining 7w
Planning permission, Telecommunications technology 488-9w
Public lavatories 487w
Standard spending assessments 101-3w, 203-4w, 324w
Standard spending assessments, Council tax capping 102w
Travelling people, Caravan sites 486w
Urban development corporations, Expenditure 208w
Urban Regeneration Agency 485w
Urban Regeneration Agency, Expenditure 209w

Bank notes
21w

Banks
19-20w
Offshore funds 121w

Banks, Mr Matthew
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 123-4
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 47, 59
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 163, 171, 194-6
Questions
Business expansion scheme 119w
Employment opportunities, Wales 8
Private rented housing 103w

Banks, Mr Robert
Questions
Police pensions, Expenditure 174w

Banks, Mr Tony
Debates etc.
Elephants (03:11:93) 490-3
Questions
Church Commissioners, Investment 44w
GP fundholders, Greater London 211-2w
Northern Ireland Office, Official hospitality 356w
Prime Minister, Official hospitality 25w
School buildings, Repairs & maintenance 145w

Barnes, Mr Harry
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 488
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 535
Parliamentary questions (04:11:93) 586-8
Questions
Church property, Terrorism 45w
EC Foreign Affairs Council 337
VAT 461w

Barnet
Council tax 204w

Barristers
Public appointments 503w
Racial discrimination 318w

Barron, Mr Kevin
Questions
Railways Bill 516
VAT, Energy prices 499-500w

Bates, Mr Michael
Questions
European Free Trade Association, EC accession 331

Batiste, Mr Spencer
Questions
A1-M1 link, Road construction 338w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 333
Student grants 138
Surgery, Death 169w, 216w

Battle, Mr John
Questions
Building industry, Unemployment 578w
Council housing management, Contracts for services 482w
Housing, Capital investment 482-4w
Housing benefits 591w
Housing finance 260w
Planning permission, Opencast mining 7w
Pregnant women, Energy prices 546-7w
Tenants' choice 485-6w
Tenants' rights, Council housing management 484-5w
Unemployment, Building workers 581w

Bayley, Mr Hugh
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 59-60, 65-7, 109-11
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 197-8, 204, 232, 273-5
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 423, 427-8
Questions
Forests, Access to countryside 152w
Forests, Land acquisition 251-2w
GP fundholders 453w
GP fundholders, Drugs 61w
Imphal Barracks York, Offices 132w
Youth unemployment 155w

BBC
309-10w

BBC External Services
Government grants 28w

Beaches
Water pollution 327w

Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 120, (03:11:93) 486
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 401, 411

Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret—continued
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 461-3, 468
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 598-602, 605

Beef
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 6

Beef premiums
Scotland 440w
Wales 336w

Beer
Alcoholic drinks duties 464-5w

Beggs, Mr Roy
Questions
A8, Road traffic 262w
Antrim Hospital, Ambulance services 355w
Authorised investigators, Codes of practice 359w
Bank notes 21w
Children, Migration 499w
Educational finance, EC countries 53-4w
History education, Northern Ireland 148w
International Investments, Criminal investigation 496w
Mental health community care, Northern Ireland 356w
Northern Ireland Office, Civil servants' background 262w
Postgraduate students, Student loans 54w
Psychiatric nurses, Northern Ireland 498w
Respite care, Northern Ireland 497w
Security, Northern Ireland 357-60w

Beith, Rt Hon A J
Questions
Building industry, Unemployment 503-4
Dept of the Serjeant at Arms 496w
Discretionary student grants 145w
Fluoridation, Northern region 459w
Members' facilities 199w
Postal rates, OECD countries 515w

Belgium
Arrests 327-8
Human rights 327-8

Belize
Armed forces deployment 336, 472w
Sovereignty 87w

Bellingham, Mr Henry
Questions
Badgers, Bovine tuberculosis 314w
Haiti, Foreign policy 280w

Belvedere
Refuse derived fuel 347w

Bendall, Mr Vivian
Questions
Taxis, Railway stations 12w

Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 30
Police (Amendment) Bill, 1R (03:11:93) 370
Value Added Tax (Democratic Control) Bill, 1R (03:11:93) 370

Bennett, Mr Andrew F
Debates etc.
British Waterways Bill (HL), Order to proceed in next session (02:11:93) 134
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendments (03:11:93) 405, 413-5
Questions
Civil service retirement, Re-employment 293w
Dept of Employment, Early retirement 156-7w
Health & Safety Executive, Contracts for services 265w
Health & Safety Executive, Management consultants 265w
Health & Safety Executive, Recruitment 265w
VAT, Publications 504

Beresford, Sir Paul
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 50

Berry, Dr Roger
Questions
Balance of trade 508
Economic situation 470w
Economic situation, OECD countries 260w
Local government reform, Avon 4-5w

Berwickshire
Local government reform 74w, 153w
Railway stations 11w

Betts, Mr Clive
Questions
Corporation tax, Tax allowances 261w
Crime, Unemployment 16w
Income support, Mortgage relief 194w
Income tax, Tax allowances 115w
Invalidity benefits, Social security benefits disqualification 270w
Local government revenue 487-8w
Ministers, Legal costs 56w
Party conferences, Speeches 56w
Standard spending assessments 102-3w
Standard spending assessments, Council tax capping 102w
Taxation, Invalidity benefits 257w
VAT, Tax allowances 256w

Bexley
Police 179w

Bicycles
Railway travel 232-3w

Biffen, Rt Hon John
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 187-8

Bilateral aid
604w

Birmingham
Hospitals 60w
Taxis 523w

Birmingham six
319w, 366w

Bishops
Pay 12-3

Blaenau Gwent
Hospitals 5
Poverty 5-6

Blair, Mr Tony
Questions
Burglary, Habitual offenders 570w
Crimes of violence, Prosecutions 316w

Blunkett, Mr David
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 344-6
Questions
Ambulance services, Manpower 221-2w
Baby care units 455w
District health authorities, Repairs & maintenance 64w
GP fundholders 212w
Health service staff, NHS trusts 542w
Health service staff, Pay review bodies 543w
Hospital waiting lists, Scotland 530w
Hospital waiting lists, Wales 511w
Intensive care, Children 458w
Lost working days, Mental illness 455w
Lost working days, Sick leave 455w
Mental hospitals, Hospital closures 543w
NHS charges 542-3w
NHS review, Expenditure 543w
Nurses, Manpower 547w
Pathology, Contracts for services 455-6w
Regional health authorities, Manpower 547w

Boateng, Mr Paul
Questions
Barristers, Racial discrimination 318w
Class actions 317w
Crown courts 17
Crown courts, Crime victims 317w
Crown Prosecution Service 315w
Legal aid scheme 319w
Legal aid scheme, Expenditure 318-9w

Boateng, Mr Paul—continued
Magistrates' courts, Administration of justice 318w
Miscarriages of justice 574-5w
Prosecutions 315w
Recorders, Manpower 319w

Bolton
Departmental correspondence 482w

Bomb disposal
Mines 474w

Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Questions
Armed forces civilians 472-3w
Belize 335-6

Booth, Mr Hartley
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 525

Bosnia-Herzegovina
Armed conflict 276-7w, 301-2w
Armed forces deployment 476w
Overseas aid 339-40, 605-6w
Overseas students 598w
Peace negotiations 88w
Sanctions 302w
War casualties 302w

Boswell, Mr Tim, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education
Questions
Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Unit 147w
Curriculum, EC internal trade 136
Dept for Education, Advertising 397w
Dept for Education, Joint public-private sector ventures 149-50w
Dept for Education, Non-departmental public bodies 494w
Discretionary student grants 145w
Discretionary student grants, Expenditure 392-6w
Education, Ethnic minorities 136
Educational finance, EC countries 53-4w
Educational standards 139
Foyer hostel scheme 139
Further Education Funding Council for England, Expenditure 150w
Languages education 136-7
Postgraduate students, Student loans 54w
School leaving, Employment opportunities 139-40
Student accommodation, Leicester 137-8
Student grants 137-8, 391w
Student loans 148w, 395-6w
Student loans, Administrative delays 494w
Student loans, Personal income 148w
Vocational education, Schools 140

Bottomley, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 34
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 465-6
Questions
Newspaper press, Prices 556w
Newspaper press, Unfair trading practices 512w
Summertime, Road accidents 439-40w
VAT, Press advertising 558w
VAT, Publications 552w, 557-8w

Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia, Secretary of State for Health
Debates etc.
Adoption, Ministerial statements (03:11:93) 343-55
Questions
Dept of Health, Cash limits 62-3w
Regional health authorities, NHS administration 217w

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
33-6w, 248-52w
Beef 6
Channel Islands 35-6w
Isle of Man 35-6w
Mink 34w
Northern Ireland 135w

***Bovine spongiform encephalopathy**—continued*
Offal 34w

Bovine tuberculosis
Badgers 314w
South West region 506-7w

***Bowis, Mr John**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Health*
Questions
Child protection committees 456-7w
Child protection committees, Local government expenditure 456w
Child safety 457w
Children, Migration 63w, 454-5w
Community care, Finance 166w
Community care, Government grants to local authorities 166w
Community care, Ombudsman 535w
Community care, Transitional arrangements 166w, 168w
Foster care 170w
Geriatric patients, Iatrogenic illness 453w
Health, Heating 540w
Hearing aids 544w
Hospices, Hospital beds 537w
Housing benefits, Young people 456w
Intensive care, Children 458w
Lost working days, Mental illness 455w
Mental health, Unemployment 581w
Mental health community care 533w
Mental hospitals, Hospital closures 543w
Mental patients, Suicide 453w
NHS trusts, Mentally handicapped 63-4w
Nursing homes, Closures 168w
Patient's Charter, Mental patients 534w
Resettlement, Publications 63w
Secure accommodation, Young people 168w
Speech therapy, Expenditure 543w
Suicide, Government grants to voluntary organisations 215w
Suicide, Mental patients 459w
UNICEF, Child abuse 531w

Boyce, Mr Jimmy
Questions
Publications, Prices 147w

Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Questions
Housing action trusts, Brent 207-8w

Bradford
Driving tests 232w

Bradley, Mr Keith
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 366
Questions
Drugs, Licensing 452w
Maintenance, Children 80w, 84w, 195-6w
Maintenance, Debt collection 196w
Schools, Capital investment 135
Social security benefits reductions, EC countries 82w
Social security benefits reductions, Personal injury compensation 84w

Brandreth, Mr Gyles
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 352
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 441
Questions
Air pollution control, Local government functions 207w
Employment opportunities, Chester 149

Brazier, Mr Julian
Questions
Russia, Politics & government 275w

Breast cancer
Hospital waiting lists 540w
Surgery 540w

Brent
Housing action trusts 207-8w

Bridges
Bromford 340w
Estuaries 334w, 340-1w, 448w

***Bridges**—continued*
Scotland 448w
Wales 334w

Brighton
City technology colleges 148w

Bristow, Desmond
90-1w
Publications 480w

British Aerosol Manufacturers' Association
352w

British Aerospace
Information technology 297-8w

British Airports Authority
523-4w

British Airways
342-3w, 594w

British Approvals Board for Telecommunications
Directors 352w

British Council
593w
Public appointments 592-3w

British Gas
339-40w, 346w

British Nuclear Fuels
68-70w, 433-4w

British Programme for Democracy
30w

British Rail
150-2, 232-3w
Privatisation 12w, (01:11:93) 38-119, (02:11:93) 156-316, 232w, (03:11:93) 419-51, 512-3

British Railways Board
(01:11:93) 38-119, (02:11:93) 156-316, (03:11:93) 419-51

British residents abroad
Prisoners 28w

British Telecom
Privatisation 121-2w, 513-4

British Waterways Bill (HL) 1990/91
Debates etc.
Order to proceed in next session (02:11:93) 133, (03:11:93) 325

British Youth Council
Government grants 29-30w, 338-9

Broadcasting controls
Terrorism 147, 576w

Brodsworth Hall
Art works 308w

Bromford
Bridges 340w

***Brooke, Rt Hon Peter**, Secretary of State for National Heritage*
Questions
Arts Council, Administrative costs 200-2w
Arts Council, Public appointments 23w
Arts Council grants, Manpower 201w
Arts finance, Greater London 200w
Broadcasting controls, Terrorism 576w
Brodsworth Hall, Art works 308w
Dept of National Heritage, Cash limits 99w
Dept of National Heritage, Civil service manpower 25w
Dept of National Heritage, Government buildings 25w
Millenium Fund 24w
Orchestras, Arts Council grants 23-4w, 98w
Orchestras, Greater London 201w
Orchestras, Income 97-8w
Satellite broadcasting, Sexual deviancy 24w
Television 310w
Television licences, Fees & charges 309-10w

Brown, Mr Gordon
Questions
Tax avoidance 501

Brown, Mr Nicholas
Debates etc.
Members' pensions (04:11:93) 553
Parliamentary questions (04:11:93) 579-82
Questions
VAT, Publications 505

Brucellosis
Import of live animals 40w

Brunei
Arms trade 295w

Bryn Llywarch Special School
333w

Building industry
Death 266-7w
Industrial accidents 266-7w
Northern Ireland 264w
Unemployment 503-4, 578w
VAT 510-1
Wales 8

Building regulations
Local government functions 326w

Building workers
Unemployment 581w

Buildings
AWE Aldermaston 64w

Bulimia
Medical research 451w

Burden, Mr Richard
Questions
National Rivers Authority, Laboratories 489w

Burglary
373-5w
Habitual offenders 570w

Burns, Mr Simon
Debates etc.
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 597, 606
Questions
British Telecom, Privatisation 121-2w
Central Statistical Office, Cash limits 21w
EC budget 113w
Grant maintained schools, Essex 145
South Africa, Democracy 326
Treasury, Cash limits 21-2w

***Burt, Mr Alistair**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Social Security*
Questions
Child benefit 189w
Child Support Agency 78-80w
Child Support Agency, Pay incentives 590w
Child Support Agency, Performance standards 80w, 590w
Child Support Agency, Social security benefits 390w
Children, Maintenance 587-9w
Council tax benefits 193-4w
Council tax benefits, Social security benefits reductions 187w
Family benefits 189w
Housing benefits 189-91w, 591w
Housing benefits, Scotland 382-6w
Housing benefits, Social security recipients 591w
Income support, Earnings rules 271w
Income support, Literacy 78w
Income support, Mortgage relief 194w
Income support, Mortgages 272w
Income support, Social security benefits reductions 78w, 192w
Income support, Social security recipients 192-3w
Lone parents, Social security recipients 391w
Low incomes 381w
Low incomes, Marginal tax rates 77w
Maintenance, Children 80-1w, 84w, 194-6w, 390w, 581-5w, 589-90w
Maintenance, Debt collection 196w
Maternity payments, Adoption 194w
Quarry House, Television programmes 186w
Social Fund, Ynys Mon 271-4w
Social security & taxation, Marginal tax rates 188-90w

Burt, Mr Alistair—continued
Social security benefits, Children 186w
Social security benefits, Earnings rules 269-70w
Social security benefits, Investment income 82w
Social security benefits, Publicity 187-8w
Social security benefits, Take-up 81-2w
Social Security Benefits Agency, Clothing 585w
Social Security Benefits Agency, Productivity 389w
Social security benefits reductions 77w
Social security recipients, Personal income 188w

Bus services
Competition 524w

Buses
Exhaust emission controls 341-2w

Business expansion scheme
119w

Business on own account scheme
70-2w

Business premises
Family doctors 212w

Business statements
(01:11:93) 119-24, (03:11:93) 483-7

Butler, Mr Peter
Questions
Dept of the Environment, Cash limits 5w
Office of Gas Supply, Cash limits 58w

Butter
Intervention stocks 504-5w

Byers, Mr Stephen
Questions
City technology colleges, Property transfer 148w
Civil service manpower, Dept of Health 64w
Civil service manpower, Dept of National Heritage 25w
Civil service manpower, Dept of Transport 12w
Civil service manpower, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 30w
Civil service manpower, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 41w
Civil service manpower, Scottish Office 71w
Civil service manpower, Treasury 22w
Civil service manpower, Welsh Office 51w
Discretionary student grants, Expenditure 392-6w
Government buildings, Dept of National Heritage 25w
Government buildings, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 253w
Grant Maintained Schools Centre 492w, 510w
Hashemi, Mohammed 480w, 515w, 525w
Local education authorities, Local government reform 149w
School meals, Expenditure 149w

Cabinet Office
Cash limits 57w

Caledonian MacBrayne
Capital investment 242w

Callaghan, Mr Jim
Questions
Anglo-Irish talks 134w
Community relations, Northern Ireland 355w
Industrial development, Northern Ireland 354w
Integrated schools, Northern Ireland 353-4w
Low incomes 381w
Northern Ireland government 355w
Social security benefits, Children 186w
Social security benefits reductions 77w
Social security recipients, Personal income 188w
Unemployment, Northern Ireland 135w

Cameras
Traffic lights 523w

Campbell, Mrs Anne
Questions
Grant maintained schools 144-5

Campbell, Mr Menzies
Debates etc.
Football Spectators & Sports Grounds Orders 1993 (04:11:93) 557, 564-6, 568
Questions
Damascus Declaration 330
European fighter aircraft, Computer software 67w
Hart, David, Ministry of Defence 477-8w
Minesweepers, Arms trade 67w
Operation Deny Flight 67-8w
Victor aircraft, Arms trade 67w

Campbell-Savours, Mr D N
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 414
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 534
Members' interests, Points of order (04:11:93) 540
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 604
Questions
Student grants 391w

Canavan, Mr Dennis
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 32
Questions
House of Lords 513
Middle East, Peace negotiations 332

Cancer
Hospital consultants 539w
International conferences 171w, 322w
Medical education 541w

Cancer hazards
Chrysoidine 214w, 512w
Fishing 512w

Cann, Mr Jamie
Questions
Ministry of Defence, Government buildings 474w

Capital allowances
Corporation tax 260-1w

Capital gains tax
114-5w

Caravan sites
Travelling people 486w

Carbon dioxide
Air pollution 94w
Air pollution control 94-5w
Energy conservation 3w

Cardiff
Homelessness 3-5

Cardiff Airport
1-3

Cardiff Bay
510w

Cardiff Bay barrage
(03:11:93) 374-418

Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 374-418
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Cardiff Bay Development Corporation
(03:11:93) 374-418, 511w

Career structure
Dentists 62w
Hospital consultants 62w
Nurses 60-1w

Carers' premium
497w

Carlile, Mr Alex
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Points of order (01:11:93) 120
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 111-2
Questions
Age discrimination 435w

Carlile, Mr Alex—continued
Alzheimer's disease, Wales 50w
Children in care, Wales 47-8w
European Parliament constituencies, Wales 569w
Floods, Llandudno 49w
Homelessness, Wales 4
Ice cream, Monopolies 96w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Social security claims 78w
Land drainage, Llandudno 49w
Llandudno General Hospital, Acute beds 333w
M4 332w
Public utilities, Procurement 22w
Road accidents, Children 50w
Road construction, Sites of special scientific interest 339w
Road safety, Schools 50-1w
School meals 54-5w
School meals, Wales 49w
Shipbuilding, Manpower 435w
Shipping, Government assistance 520w
Special schools, Powys 333w
Thailand, Prostitution 28w
Theft, Archaeological sites 8w
Unemployment 434w
UNESCO 28w
Workstart 437w

Carrington, Mr Matthew
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 352
Questions
Dept of Trade & Industry, Cash limits 58w, 353w

Cars
Crime 377-8w

Cash, Mr William
Debates etc.
Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993, Points of order (03:11:93) 369
Questions
EC external relations, Voting methods 338
VAT, Publications 551w
VAT, Serials 556-7w

Cash limits
Cabinet Office 57w
Central Statistical Office 21w
Dept for Education 55-6w
Dept of Health 62-3w
Dept of National Heritage 99w
Dept of Social Security 81w
Dept of the Environment 5w
Dept of Trade & Industry 58w, 353w
Dept of Transport 89w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 30-2w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 39-40w
Ministry of Defence 68w
Office of Gas Supply 58w
Office of Population Censuses & Surveys 61-2w
Office of Public Service & Science 25-6w, 90w
Office of Telecommunications 349w
PSA Building Management 5w
Scottish Office 71-3w
Treasury 21-2w
Welsh Office 52-3w

Catalytic converters
11w

Category A prisoners
Costs 366w

Cattle
36-40w
Transport of animals 508w
Wales 510w

Cattle diseases
311w

Cenotaph
Festivals & special occasions 202w

Census
Agriculture 449w

Central Intelligence Agency
479-80w

Central Policy Review Staff
420w

Central Statistical Office
Cash limits 21w

Cereals
Wales 9-10

Cervical cancer
Inverclyde Royal Hospital (01:11:93) 126-32

Cervical Smear Test Inquiry
(01:11:93) 126-32

Challenger tanks
Defence procurement 131w

Channel Islands
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 35-6w

Channel tunnel
High speed trains 338w
Railway network 89w, 232w, 338w, 522w
Railway stations 338w, 522w

Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 87
Questions
Dept of the Serjeant at Arms, International conferences 86w
European Free Trade Association, EC accession 332
House of Commons, Cost effectiveness 86w
Ibbs Report 85w
Maintenance, Children 390w, 589w
Palace of Westminster, Gun sports 199w
Road construction, Hereford 522-3w

Chartermark scheme
501-2w

Chemical weapons
Vaccination 475-6w

Chemists shops
Contraceptives 537-8w
Lancashire 536w

Chequers
Security 92w

Chessells Committee
see London Implementation Group

Chester
Employment opportunities 149

Child abuse
UNICEF 531w

Child benefit
189w
Taxation 254w

Child care
Tax allowances 120-1w

Child Migrants Trust
63w, 147, 276w, 454-5w, 499w

Child protection committees
456-7w
Local government expenditure 456w

Child safety
457w
Teachers 409w

Child Support Agency
78-80w, 194-5w
Bailiffs 196w
Pay incentives 590w
Performance standards 80w, 590w
Social security benefits 390w

Childbirth
166w
Women's prisons 14-5w

Children
Hospices 537w
Intensive care 458w

Children—continued
Maintenance 80-1w, 84w, 132w, 147-8, 194-6w, 390w, 581-5w, 587-90w
Migration 63w, 147, 276w, 454-5w, 499w
Northern Ireland 499w
Road accidents 50w
Sexual offences 563-8w
Social security benefits 186w

Children Act 1989
Questions
456w

Children in care
Wales 47-8w

"Children of Despair"
602w

China
Family planning 601-2w
Nuclear weapons tests 417-8w, 594w

Chronically sick
Independent Living 1993 Fund 77w

Chrysoidine
Cancer hazards 214w, 512w

Church Commissioners
Expenditure 13
Investment 44-5w
Sunday trading 13

Church property
Land use 45w
Terrorism 45w

Citibank International Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
3R* (01:11:93) 1
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Citizen's Charter
501-2w

City grants
485w

City pride
(04:11:93) 517-27

City technology colleges
494w
Brighton 148w
Property transfer 148w

Civil Aviation Authority
343-4w

Civil defence
Finance 175-6w, 376-7w

Civil proceedings
Tax collection 257w

Civil servants
Commuters 63w
Ministry of Defence 133w
Public expenditure 584-6w

Civil servants' background
Northern Ireland Office 262w

Civil servants' business appointments
Treasury 59w

Civil service agencies
Manpower 502w
Wales 7-8

Civil service manpower
561w
Armed forces strength 291w
Dept of Employment 577-8w
Dept of Health 64w
Dept of National Heritage 25w
Dept of Transport 12w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 30w
Inland Revenue 258w
Low flying 130w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 41w
Ministry of Defence 524-5w
Scottish Office 71w
Treasury 22w

Civil service manpower—continued
Welsh Office 51w
Women 577-8w

Civil service retirement
Re-employment 293w

Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth, Chancellor of the Exchequer
Questions
Building industry, Unemployment 503-4
EC Finance Council 117-8w
Employment policy 504
Interest rates 510
Retail trade 509
Tax avoidance 501
Unemployment 503
VAT 501-2
VAT, Energy prices 499-501
VAT, Fruit juices 509-10

Class actions
317w

Clergy
Pensions 45w

Clifton-Brown, Mr Geoffrey
Questions
Educational finance 146w

Clinical Standards Advisory Group
455w

Clinical wastes
Letchworth (04:11:93) 618-24

Closures
Nursing homes 168w

Clothing
Social Security Benefits Agency 585w
Social Security benefits rules 265-6w

Clwyd
Family health services authorities 46w

Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Questions
Dept of Employment, Civil service manpower 577-8w
Labour market 581w
Mental health, Unemployment 581w

Coal mine closures
Durham county 517w
Methane 517w
River pollution 7w

Coal mining
Industrial injuries scheme 591-2w
Wales 46w

Codes of practice
Authorised investigators 359w
Medical treatments 542w
Police cautions 496w
UN High Commissioner for Refugees 303w

Codex Alimentarius Commission
509w

Coffey, Ms Ann
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 348
Child Support Agency, Points of order (03:11:93) 368, 369-70
Oral question time point of order (03:11:93) 342
Questions
Crisis loans, Administrative delays 388-9w
Crisis loans, Social security recipients 388w
Hearing aids 544w
Housing associations, Rents 483-4w
Housing benefits 591w
NHS internal market 544-5w
Prisoners' home leave 238w
Social Security Benefits Agency, Productivity 389w
VAT, Energy prices 461w

Cohen, Mr Harry
Questions
Gardner, Joy 366w
Listed buildings, Hospitals 98-9w
Radioactive waste disposal 6w, 324w

Cohen, Mr Harry—continued
Sea pollution, Waste disposal 41-2w, 313w
Women's prisons, Childbirth 14-5w
Women's prisons, Pregnant women 14w

Colvin, Mr Michael
Questions
Angola, Armed conflict 334
Industrial finance initiative 558-9w
One stop shop initiative 512w
Rabbits, Pest control 509w

Commission for Local Administration in Wales
10

Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment
538w

Commonwealth
South Africa 326

Commonwealth Institute
Finance 27w

Community action
581w
Take-up 578-9w
Wales 436

Community care
Finance 166w
Government grants to local authorities 166w
Greater London 168w
Ombudsman 535w
Transitional arrangements 166w, 168w

Community charge grant
324w

Community health services
Government grants 168w

Community relations
Northern Ireland 355w

Commuters
Civil servants 63w

Companies
Debts 515w

Companies House Executive Agency
Contracts for services 348w

Company cars
520w

Company liquidations
Equatorial Bank 20w
Mount Banking Corporation 20w

Company taxation
Foreign investment in UK 463w

Competition
Bus services 524w

Complaints
Low flying 283w, 285w
Patients 460-2w

Complaints against local government
Wales 10

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
USA 418w

Computer software
European fighter aircraft 67w, 297w

Confederation for the Registration of Gas Installers
Annual reports 577w

Conference on Security & Cooperation in Europe
see European Security Conference

Conferences
Grant maintained schools 282-3w

Congdon, Mr David
Questions
Special education 141
VAT, Publications 505

Connor Peripherals
Government assistance to industry 239w
Redundancy 239-40w

Conservative Party
73w

Construction costs
Pindar project 525w

Consultants
Ministry of Defence 294w

Consumer expenditure
464w
VAT zero rating 551w

Contraceptives
Chemists shops 537-8w

Contracts for services
Armed forces civilians 133w
Companies House Executive Agency 348w
Council housing management 482w
Doncaster Prison 375w
Health & Safety Executive 265w
Local government services 328-9w
Ministerial statements (04:11:93) 528-38
Pathology 455-6w
Restart programme 420-33w
Scottish health boards 440-6w, 529w
Secure training centres 18-9w

Contracts of employment
Parole Board 571w

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
(03:11:93) 490-8, 597-8w

Cook, Mr Frank
Questions
China, Nuclear weapons tests 594w
Germany, Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 594w
Nuclear weapons tests 597w

Coombs, Mr Anthony
Questions
Dogs, Liability for animals 574w
Educational standards 143-4
Employment policy 504

Coombs, Mr Simon
Questions
Arts Council, Administrative costs 200-2w
Arts Council, Public appointments 23w
Arts Council grants, Manpower 201w
Dept of Health, Cash limits 62-3w
Office of Population Censuses & Surveys, Cash limits 61-2w
Orchestras, Arts Council grants 23-4w, 98w
Orchestras, Greater London 201w
Orchestras, Income 97-8w

Coopers & Lybrand
Railway track 232w

Cope, Rt Hon Sir John, Paymaster-General
Questions
Alcoholic drinks duties, Beer 464-5w
Alcoholic drinks duties, Tax evasion 465w, 554w
Alcoholic drinks duties, Tax yields 551-2w
Customs & Excise, EC internal trade 553w
EC budget 113w
EC Cohesion Fund 468-9w
EC internal trade, Off-licences 553w
Excise duties 550-1w
Literacy Education & Training 21w
Newspaper press, Prices 556w
Telephone services, Government departments 560w
Tobacco duties 21w
Tobacco duties, Tax yields 256-7w
Treasury, Civil service manpower 22w
UK contributions to EC budget 119-20w, 259w
VAT 255-6w, 461-2w
VAT, Accounting 462-3w
VAT, Air fares 560w
VAT, Building industry 510-1

Cope, Rt Hon Sir John—continued
VAT, Energy prices 461w, 549-50w, 560w
VAT, Fruit juices 22w, 258-9w
VAT, Newspaper press 505
VAT, Press advertising 558w
VAT, Publications 461-2w, 504-5, 551-2w, 557-8w
VAT, Serials 556-7w
VAT, Tax allowances 256w
VAT, Tax yields 256w, 510
VAT registration, Lewisham 465-6w
VAT zero rating 462w
VAT zero rating, Consumer expenditure 551w

Copyright Designs & Patents Act 1988
Questions
233-4w

Corbett, Mr Robin
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 525

Corbyn, Mr Jeremy
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 460, 470

Cormack, Mr Patrick
Debates etc.
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 603, 612-3
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 281
Questions
Ministry of Defence, Next steps initiative 124w
Sarajevo, EC aid 337
VAT, Energy prices 500-1

Corporation tax
121w, 470w
Capital allowances 260-1w
Tax allowances 261w

Corston, Ms Jean
Questions
Children, Maintenance 588-9w
Maintenance, Children 583-5w
Sheep dipping, Health hazards 33w

Cory Environmental
347w

Cost effectiveness
House of Commons 86w

Cost per pupil
Educational publications 405-8w

Couchman, Mr James
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 532
Questions
Dept for Education, Cash limits 55-6w

Council for Legal Education
318w

Council house sales
488w
Local government revenue 205w
Mortgages 101w

Council housing
Capital investment 320-2w
Wales 10-1

Council housing finance
329w

Council housing management
Contracts for services 482w
Tenants' rights 484-5w

Council of Europe
Human rights 328

Council of Ministers
304-7w

Council tax
Barnet 204w
Valuation tribunals 323w
Wandsworth 204w

Council tax benefits
189-90w, 193-4w
Social security benefits reductions 187w

Council tax capping
Standard spending assessments 102w

Counterfeit manufacturing
Audio recordings 233-4w

Countryside
Surveys 327w

County councils
509w

Courts
18

Cousins, Mr Jim
Questions
Aerospace industry, Government assistance to industry 234-6w
AIDS, Hospital patients 220w
Air force bases, Malaysia 295w
Arms trade, Brunei 295w
Arms trade, Malaysia 295w
British Aerospace, Information technology 297-8w
British Approvals Board for Telecommunications, Directors 352w
Corporation tax 121w
Defence contracts 296-7w
Defence contracts, Jordan 295-6w
Defence research, Small businesses 297w
Docklands light railway, Directors 490w
Drugs, Death 545-6w
European fighter aircraft, Computer software 297w
Export licensing, Iraq 518-9w
Export licensing, Jordan 519w
Eye tests, Northern region 546w
GEC 298w
GEC, Ferranti 298w
GEC, Guinness Peat Aviation 344w
Housing construction, Tyne & Wear 206w
IMS Limited, Export credit guarantees 234w
Income support, Earnings rules 271w
International Military Services 294w
Joint Intelligence Committee 282w, 480w
Konver programme 516w
National savings 552-4w
Newcastle General Hospital, AIDS 220w
NHS Corporate Management Task Force 218-9w
NHS trusts, Professional misconduct 213w
Offshore safety, Government grants 516w
Post Office, Capital investment 350w
Post Office, External financing limits 350w
Post Office, Financial targets 350w
Post Office, Manpower 350-1w
Post Office, Privatisation 515-6w
Project Al Yamamah 295w
Radiotherapy, Medical equipment 221w
Restart programme, Contracts for services 420-33w
Road construction, Compensation 225w
Royal Victoria Infirmary & Associated Hospitals NHS Trust, Ophthalmic services 217w
Royal Victoria Infirmary & Associated Hospitals NHS Trust, Parking 217w
Shipbuilding, EC grants & loans 349-50w
Shipbuilding Intervention Fund 96-7w
Social security benefits, Earnings rules 269-70w
Social security payments, Post offices 387w
Surgery, Patients' rights 214-5w
Tax allowances, Enterprise zones 257-8w
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, Police 235w
Urban Regeneration Agency 485w
Viral haemorrhagic disease, Notifiable diseases 219w

Cox, Mr Tom
Debates etc.
Members' pensions (04:11:93) 550-2
Questions
Armed forces, Redundancy pay 293w
Arts finance, Greater London 200w
BBC External Services, Government grants 28w
British residents abroad, Prisoners 28w
House of Commons catering, Members' facilities 362w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, Air pollution control 489w
Immigrants, Cyprus 479w
Kenya, Overseas aid 26w
Overseas aid 135-6w
Prison population 179-82w
Prisons, Privatisation 12-3w
Road works, Greater London 10w
Secure accommodation, Young people 168w
Uganda, Elections 600-1w
Uganda, General elections 601w, 603w
Uganda, Overseas aid 600w
US bases 292-3w
Vandalism, Greater London 237-8w
Youth custody 179w

Crime
Cars 377-8w
Leicester 237w
Prisoners 363w
Unemployment 16w

Crime prevention
Motor vehicle theft 365w

Crime victims
Crown courts 317w

Crimes of violence
Prisoners 236-7w
Prosecutions 316w

Criminal injuries compensation
Scotland 450-1w

Criminal investigation
International Investments 496w

Criminal Justice Act 1993
Questions
575-6w

Criminal justice liaison committees
Secure accommodation 17-8w

Criminal proceedings
Costs 376w
Peterlee 495-6w

Criminal records
Public service vehicles 521w
Road haulage licences 337w
Vetting 574w

Criminal statistics
Scotland 154w

Crisis loans
Administrative delays 388-9w
Social security recipients 388w

Crofters Commission
(04:11:93) 587-8

Crofters (Scotland) Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
2R* & rem stages* (04:11:93) 587-8
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Crofting
Scotland (04:11:93) 587-8

Crown courts
17
Administration of justice 317-8w
Crime victims 317w

Crown Prosecution Service
315-6w

Crozier, Brian
90-1w
Publications 480w

Cryer, Mr Bob
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 351
Business questions (01:11:93) 121, (03:11:93) 486
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 401, 412
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 475-7
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 162, 214-5, 266
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 518
Questions
Driving tests, Bradford 232w
Japan, Manufacturing industries 341-2

Cultural relations
Scotland 593w
Wales 593w

Cummings, Mr John
Questions
Coal mine closures, Durham county 517w
Coal mine closures, Methane 517w
Criminal proceedings, Peterlee 495-6w
Durham Constabulary, Police cautions 364w
Mining, Environmental impact assessment 491w
St Helena, Balance of trade 514w
St Helena, Work permits 599w
Slovakia, Diplomatic service 599w

Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina 337-8
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Ministers' visits abroad 88-9w
Health physics 205w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 331
United Kingdom NIREX, Departmental correspondence 208w

Curriculum
EC internal trade 136
English education 147w
Religious education 54w

Curry, Mr David, Minister of State, Dept of the Environment
Questions
Local Government Commission for England 105w
Local government reform, Finance 7w
PSA Building Management, Cash limits 5w
Urban programme, Greater London 487-8w

Custodial treatment
Northern Ireland 42w

Customs & Excise
EC internal trade 553w

Cyfronydd Special School
333w

Cyprus
Immigrants 479w
Peace negotiations 279w
UN resolutions 279w

Dafis, Mr Cynog
Questions
British Council, Public appointments 592-3w
Carbon dioxide, Air pollution 94w
Cultural relations, Wales 593w
Domestic energy conservation, Wales 6-7
Environment protection, Packaging 330w
Packaging, EC action 1-2w
Teacher training, Wales 336w

Dalyell, Mr Tam
Questions
Jones, Reginald Victor, Honours 479-80w
Timber frame housing, Fire regulations 530w

Damascus Declaration
330

Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
Questions
574w

Darling, Mr Alistair
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 364

Davidson, Mr Ian
Questions
Armed forces deployment, Belize 472w
Belize, Sovereignty 87w
Butter, Intervention stocks 504-5w

Davidson, Mr Ian—continued
Farm incomes 505-6w
Local government reform, Costs 527w
Public Record Office, Asbestos 292w
SA80 rifle 472w
VAT, Air fares 560w

Davies, Rt Hon Denzil
Questions
Cardiff Airport 1-2

Davies, Mr Quentin
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 475-6
Questions
House renovation grants 207w
Languages education 136-7

Davies, Mr Ron
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 399, 401, 404
Questions
Local government finance, Wales 335w
Poverty, Blaenau Gwent 5-6
Sheep premiums 311-2w
Sheep premiums, Scotland 447w
Sheep premiums, Wales 331w
Unemployment, Wales 9

Davis, Mr David, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of Public Service & Science
Questions
Anorexia, Medical research 451w
Highways Agency 524w
Official report 502-3w

Davis, Mr Terry
Debates
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 346
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 533
Inland Revenue, Points of order (04:11:93) 539

Day, Mr Stephen
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 46

Day care of children
Northern Ireland 356-7w

Death
Building industry 266-7w
Driving offences 14w
Drugs 545-6w
Hypothermia 212-3w, 456w
Surgery 169w, 215-6w, 531w

Debt collection
Maintenance 196w

Debts
Companies 515w

Debts written off
National insurance contributions 260w
PAYE 260w
Taxation 115-6w

Defence
France 524w

Defence contracts
296-7w
Jordan 295-6w
RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine 288w

Defence expenditure
471w
EC countries 477w

Defence Export Services Organisation
294w

Defence land
Land values 290w

Defence procurement
300w
Airships 286w
Austria 300w

Defence procurement—continued
Challenger tanks 131w

Defence research
Small businesses 297w

Democracy
Guatemala 336
Russia 275w
South Africa 278-9w, 326
Yugoslavia 88w

Denham, Mr John
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 88-91, 102
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 282-3

Dentists
Career structure 62w

Departmental correspondence
Bolton 482w
Road construction 342w
United Kingdom NIREX 208w

Departmental forms
Maintenance 194-5w

Departmental publications
Deregulation initiative 345w
Technology colleges 396-7w

Deprivation indicators
203w

Dept for Education
Advertising 397w
Cash limits 55-6w
Joint public-private sector ventures 149-50w
Non-departmental public bodies 494w

Dept of Employment
(04:11:93) 517-27
Civil service manpower 577-8w
Early retirement 156-7w
Joint public-private sector ventures 267-8w
Ministers' visits abroad 268-70w
Non-departmental public bodies 165-6w

Dept of Health
Cash limits 62-3w
Civil service manpower 64w
Joint public-private sector ventures 172w
Ministers' visits abroad 222-4w
Non-departmental public bodies 538-9w
Relocation of employees 61w, 63w

Dept of National Heritage
Cash limits 99w
Civil service manpower 25w
Government buildings 25w
Joint public-private sector ventures 201-2w
Non-departmental public bodies 97w

Dept of Social Security
387w
Cash limits 81w
Joint public-private sector ventures 194w
Ministers' visits abroad 274w

Dept of the Environment
(04:11:93) 517-27
Cash limits 5w
Doyle, Patrick 105w
Joint public-private sector ventures 104w
Non-departmental public bodies 104w, 489-90w

Dept of the Serjeant at Arms
496w
International conferences 86w

Dept of Trade & Industry
(04:11:93) 517-27
Cash limits 58w, 353w
Government buildings 349w
Joint public-private sector ventures 95w
Non-departmental public bodies 351-2w

Dept of Transport
(04:11:93) 517-27
Cash limits 89w
Civil service manpower 12w

Dept of Transport—continued
Joint public-private sector ventures 233w

Deregulation initiative
344w
Departmental publications 345w

Derelict land grants
485w

"Development Below the Low Water"
491w

Devlin, Mr Tim
Questions
Economic situation, Northern Region 348w
Ministry of Defence, Government buildings 524-5w

Devolution
Scotland 73-4w

Devonport dockyard
Privatisation 132w

Dewar, Mr Donald
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 358-60
Questions
Child benefit 189w
Child Support Agency, Performance standards 590w
Children, Maintenance 587-8w
Company cars 520w
Council tax benefits 193-4w
Council tax benefits, Social security benefits reductions 187w
Direct taxation, Tax burden 20w
Excise duties 550-1w
Family benefits 189w
Housing benefits 189-91w
Income support, Social security benefits reductions 78w, 192w
Income support, Social security recipients 192-3w
Income tax 254-6w
Income tax, Personal income 116w
Income tax, Tax allowances 548-50w
Income tax, Taxpayers 20w
Lead free petrol 11w
Means tested benefits, Social security recipients 590-2w
Mortgage relief 116-7w, 549w
National insurance contributions 590w
National Insurance Fund 269w
National Insurance Fund, Personal pensions 381-2w
Pensioners, Personal income 190-1w
Sickness benefits, Social security recipients 186-7w
Social security, Expenditure 193w
Social security & taxation, Marginal tax rates 188-90w
Social security benefits uprating 385-7w
Tax allowances 115-6w
Tax allowances, Child care 120-1w
Tax free income, Income tax 257w
Tax thresholds, Families 116w
Taxation 122-4w
Taxation, Child benefit 254w
Taxation, Invalidity benefits 121w
VAT 255-6w
VAT, Energy prices 549-50w
VAT, Tax yields 256w
VAT zero rating, Consumer expenditure 551w

Diabetes
Health service staff 215w

Dickens, Mr Geoffrey
Questions
Economic policy, Wales 48-9w
Judges, Manpower 45-6w

Dicks, Mr Terry
Questions
Dept of the Serjeant at Arms 496w
Immigration applications, Somalia 571-2w
Immigration applications, Yugoslavia 573w
Social security benefits, Refugees 592w

Digital mapping
291-2w

Diplomatic relations
Peru 593w

Diplomatic service
Slovakia 599w
Yugoslavia 303w

Direct taxation
Tax burden 20w

Director of Passenger Rail Franchising
(01:11:93) 38-119, (02:11:93) 156-316, (03:11:93) 419-51

Directors
British Approvals Board for Telecommunications 352w
Docklands light railway 490w

Disability working allowance
189w, 269-70w

Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944
Questions
576w

Disabled workers
Travelling expenses 576w

Disablement schemes
70-2w

Discretionary student grants
145w
Expenditure 392-6w

Disqualifications
Driving offences 13w

Distributive trade
Newspaper press 57w

District health authorities
Repairs & maintenance 64w

Dobson, Mr Frank
Questions
Doyle, Patrick, Dept of the Environment 105w
Jubilee line, Private investment 339w
Jubilee line, Railway stations 339-40w
Railway Inspectorate, Manpower 438w

Docklands light railway
Directors 490w

Dogs
Liability for animals 574w

Domestic energy conservation
Wales 6-7

Domestic service
Overseas workers 363w, 562-3w, 596w

Dominie aircraft
287w

Doncaster
Public appointments 61w

Doncaster Healthcare NHS Trust
Resignations 211w

Doncaster Prison
Contracts for services 375w

Donohoe, Mr Brian H
Questions
Ayrshire & Arran Health Board, Urology 528w
Connor Peripherals, Government assistance to industry 239w
Connor Peripherals, Redundancy 239-40w
Employment opportunities, Ayrshire 240w
Regional selective assistance, Amkor Anam Europe 241w
Regional selective assistance, Scotland 240-1w

***Dorrell, Mr Stephen**, Financial Secretary to the Treasury*
Questions
British Telecom, Privatisation 121-2w
Business expansion scheme 119w
Capital gains tax 114-5w

***Dorrell, Mr Stephen**—continued*
Civil service manpower 561w
Company taxation, Foreign investment in UK 463w
Corporation tax 121w, 470w
Corporation tax, Capital allowances 260-1w
Corporation tax, Tax allowances 261w
Direct taxation, Tax burden 20w
Income tax 254-6w
Income tax, Personal income 116w
Income tax, Tax allowances 115w, 548-50w
Income tax, Tax yields 255w
Income tax, Taxpayers 20w
Indirect taxation 507
Inland Revenue, Civil service manpower 258w
Life insurance, Taxation 463w
Mortgage relief 116-7w, 549w
National debt, Offshore funds 466w
Offshore trusts 113-4w
PAYE, Debts written off 260w
Personal pensions, Public sector employment 19w
Privatisation, Fees & charges 467-8w
Tax allowances 115-6w
Tax allowances, Child care 120-1w
Tax allowances, Enterprise zones 257-8w
Tax allowances, Private sector housing 560w
Tax allowances, Railway travel 560w
Tax allowances, Share option scheme 119w
Tax avoidance 556w
Tax collection, Civil proceedings 257w
Tax credits 470-1w
Tax free income, Income tax 257w
Tax havens, Fraud 559w
Tax thresholds, Families 116w
Tax yields 463-4w
Taxation 122-4w
Taxation, Administrative costs 561w
Taxation, Child benefit 254w
Taxation, Debts written off 115-6w
Taxation, Invalidity benefits 121w, 257w
Treasury, Joint public-private sector ventures 118w
VAT 505-6
VAT, Energy prices 506-7

***Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office*
Questions
A1, Speed limits 449w
Bridges, Estuaries 448w
Caledonian MacBrayne, Capital Investment 242w
Criminal injuries compensation, Scotland 450-1w
Criminal statistics, Scotland 154w
Homicide, Scotland 527w
Housing, Public investment 246-7w
Housing Association Tenants' Ombudsman for Scotland 449w
Land ownership & tenure, Scotland 529w
Prisons, Ships 526-7w
Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, Expenditure 247w
Scottish Homes, Expenditure 247w
Scottish Office, Non-departmental public bodies 151w
Summertime, Road accidents 439-40w
Taking & driving away, Road accidents 150w
Timber frame housing, Fire regulations 530w
Travelling people, Scotland 450w

Dounreay
Nuclear reactors 529w

Doyle, Patrick
Dept of the Environment 105w

Draskovic, Vuk
88w

Drift nets
313w

Driving offences
Death 14w
Disqualifications 13w
Recreation spaces 17w

Driving tests
Bradford 232w

Drugs
Death 545-6w
GP fundholders 61w
Licensing 452w

Duncan, Mr Alan
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 122-3
Business questions intervention (01:11:93) 120
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 365
Questions
Etiquette 513
PSA Building Management, Cash limits 5w

Duncan Smith, Mr Iain
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 538
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 606, 607-8, 612
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 358, 364
Questions
Indirect taxation 507
Sex discrimination, Compensation 69-70w

Dunn, Mr Bob
Debates etc.
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 433
Questions
Dept of Transport, Cash limits 89w
Grant maintained schools, Kent 143
Retail trade 509

Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 39, 79, 83
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 158, 161-2, 258, 276-7
Questions
Middle East, Peace negotiations 278w
Milk marketing scheme 509w
Railtrack, Manpower 336w
Railtrack, Railway safety 336-7w
Railway industry, Sweden 337w
Railway safety, Isle of Wight 340w
Warble fly 505w

Durant, Sir Anthony
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 522

Durham Constabulary
Police cautions 364w

Durham county
491w
Coal mine closures 517w

Dyfed
Income 11-2

Eagle, Ms Angela
Questions
Iraq, Arms exports 279w
Pre-school education, Grant maintained schools 147w
Shipbuilding 502-3

Ealing Hospital
172-3w

Ealing Hospital NHS Trust
Finance 173w
Manpower 172w

Early retirement
Dept of Employment 156-7w
Health & Safety Executive 156w

Earnings limits
590w

Earnings rules
Housing benefits 271w
Income support 271w
Social security benefits 269-70w

East coast railway line
11w

East London
Health services 547w

East Lothian
Local government reform 74w
Mining 243w

Eastern Europe
EC aid 339
EC enlargement 280w
EC external trade 339
Manufacturing industries 340
Overseas trade 340

Eastham, Mr Ken
Questions
Schools, Capital investment 135-6

EC accession
European Free Trade Association 331-2

EC action
Fish conservation 40w
Hotel & catering industry 95w
Iron & steel industry 520w
Packaging 1-2w, 93w
Science & technology 502w
Tipping of waste 5-6w

EC Agriculture Council
304-7w

EC aid
Eastern Europe 339
Sarajevo 337

EC budget
113w

EC Budget Council
304-7w

EC Cohesion Fund
468-9w, 515, 515w
Water pollution 327w

EC Committee of the Regions
597w

EC Consumer Affairs Council
304-7w

EC Culture Council
304-7w

EC Draft 7151/92
95w

EC Education Council
304-7w

EC enlargement
Eastern Europe 280w

EC external relations
336-7
Voting methods 338

EC external trade
Eastern Europe 339
South Africa 97w

EC Finance Council
113w, 117-8w, 304-7w

EC Fisheries Council
304-7w

EC Foreign Affairs Council
304-7w, 337

EC Free Food Scheme
109-10w

EC grants & loans
514w
Employment opportunities 69-70w
Lowestoft 513-4w
Merseyside 234w
Regional aid 94w, 345-6w
Shipbuilding 349-50w
Textile industry 513w
Wales 11

EC Industry Council
304-7w

EC institutions
Members' visits abroad 362w

EC Interior & Justice Council
304-7w

EC Internal Market Council
304-7w

EC internal trade
Curriculum 136
Customs & Excise 553w
Off-licences 553w

EC law
Implementing legislation 344w
Mergers 344w

EC Transport Council
304-7w

Economic & monetary union
419-20w

Economic policy
Wales 48-9w

Economic situation
470w, 507-9
Northern region 348w
OECD countries 260w

Education
Ethnic minorities 136, 145w
Overseas aid 604-5w
Standard spending assessments 146-7w

Educational finance
146w
EC countries 53-4w

Educational policy
149-50

Educational publications
Cost per pupil 405-8w
Expenditure 398-406w

Educational qualifications
Unemployment 156w

Educational standards
139, 143-4, 145w
Disclosure of information 146w

Eggar, Mr Tim, Minister for Energy
Questions
Coal mine closures, Durham county 517w
Coal mine closures, Methane 517w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Government buildings 349w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Joint public-private sector ventures 95w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Non-departmental public bodies 351-2w
Economic situation, Northern Region 348w
Electricity generation 517w
EURATOM, Nuclear reactors 93-4w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 517w
Nuclear power, Air pollution control 94-5w
Nuclear power, Exports 347w
Nuclear safeguards, Inspections 518w
Nuclear safeguards, North Korea 347w
Office of Gas Supply, Cash limits 58w
Offshore safety, Government grants 516w
Oil industry, Overseas trade 95w
Refuse derived fuel, Belvedere 347w
Sellafield, Nuclear fuel reprocessing 346w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 345-6w
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, Police 235w

Eggs
Salmonella 457-8w, 545w

Egypt
Tourist information 27-8w

Elderly
Hypothermia 456w
Tower Hamlets 532w

Elections
Russia 30w
South Africa 326-7
Uganda 600-1w

Electrical safety
Safety standards 353w

Electricity distribution
Sarajevo 301w

Electricity generation
517w

Elephants
Nature conservation (03:11:93) 490-8

Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Debates etc.
Football Spectators & Sports Grounds Orders 1993 (04:11:93) 565, 569
Parliamentary questions (04:11:93) 582-4
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 521-2

Emphysema
591-2w

Employee share ownership schemes
119w

Employment discrimination
Compensation 69-70w

Employment level
Publishing 266w

Employment opportunities
Ayrshire 240w
Chester 149
EC grants & loans 69-70w
Foreign investment in UK 51w
Lewisham 434w
School leaving 139-40
THORP 266w
Wales 7-9, 46w

Employment policy
503-4

Energy conservation
Carbon dioxide 3w
Finance 490-1w

Energy prices
NHS 168w, 452w
Pregnant women 546-7w
VAT 150-2, 168w, 213w, 452w, 461w, 465w, 499-501, 506-7, 514, 540w, 546-7w, 549-50w, 560w

English education
Curriculum 147w

English Industrial Estates Corporation
485w

Enright, Mr Derek
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 488
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 433
Questions
Balance of trade 507
Cyprus, UN resolutions 279w

Enterprise Ayrshire
240w

Enterprise Ulster
500w

Enterprise zones
Tax allowances 257-8w

Entry clearances
Overseas workers 235-6w

Environment protection
Packaging 330w
Scottish Development Agency 530w

Environmental impact assessment
Mining 491w

Environmentally sensitive areas
33w, 36w

Equatorial Bank
Company liquidations 20w

Essex
Grant maintained schools 145

Estate Action
486w

Estuaries
Bridges 334w, 340-1w, 448w
Tunnels 340-1w

Etherington, Mr Bill
Questions
Hong Kong, Rhinoceros products 597-8w
Prison visits 575w
Prison visits, Security 575w

Ethnic minorities
Education 136, 145w
Languages education 146
Tower Hamlets 532w

Etiquette
513

EURATOM
518w
Nuclear reactors 93-4w

Europe
Forests 331w

European Agency for Safety & Health at Work
419w

European communities
GATT 275-6w

European Convention on Human Rights
87w

European Council
87w, 113w, 479w
Ministerial statements (01:11:93) 19-37

European Court of Justice
69-70w, 348w, (03:11:93) 356-67

European economic area
93w, 99-100w

European Economic Area Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

European fighter aircraft
Computer software 67w, 297w

European Free Trade Association
99-100w
EC accession 331-2

European Free Trade Association Surveillance Authority
99-100w

European Investment Bank
(01:11:93) 19-37

European Investment Fund
117-8w

European Monetary Institute
555w
Manpower 555w

European Parliament committees
596w

European Parliament constituencies
Wales 569w

European Parliamentary Constituency Committee for Wales
569w

European Parliamentary Elections Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

European Regional Development Fund
Wales 11

European Security Conference
595w, 598w

European Social Fund
69-70w, 148
South Yorkshire 158w

Evans, Mr Jonathan
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 353
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 393-4, 396

Evans, Mr Jonathan—continued
Questions
Council housing, Wales 10-1
Homelessness, Wales 4

Evans, Mr Nigel
Questions
Manufacturing industries, Interest charges 502
Quarrying, Swindon 328w
Social security abuse 512

Evans, Mr Roger
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 393-4
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (04:11:93) 539
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 610-12
Statute Law Repeals Bill *(HL)*, 2R *(04:11:93)* 592
Questions
Adoption 511
Cereals, Wales 9-10
Courts 18
Planning permission, Telecommunications technology 488w
Telecommunications technology, Germany 234w

Evennett, Mr David
Questions
Police, Bexley 179w
Refuse derived fuel, Belvedere 347w

Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Questions
Armed forces deployment 477w
Defence expenditure, EC countries 477w
UK companies abroad, Lebanon 520w

Excise duties
550-1w

Exhaust emission controls
Buses 341-2w
Wales 11w

Exhaust emissions
Motor vehicle testing 11w

Export controls
Association of South East Asian Nations 596-7w
Export promotion 6

Export credit guarantees
IMS Limited 234w

Export Credits Guarantee Department
96w

Export licensing
Iraq 518-9w
Jordan 519w

Export of live animals
508w

Export promotion
Export controls 6
Far East 277w
Government assistance 276w

Exports
Nuclear power 347w

External financing limits
Post Office 350w

Eye disorders
Medical treatments 534w

Eye tests
Northern region 546w
Scotland 74w

F15 Aircraft
RAF Lakenheath 287w

Faber, Mr David
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 35
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Peace negotiations 88w
Yugoslavia, Democracy 88w

Fabricant, Mr Michael
Questions
Beef, Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 6

Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1976
Questions
69-70w

Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Questions
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Cash limits 30-2w
Literacy 146

Falkland Islands
War crimes 365w, 525w

Families
Prisoners 13w
Tax thresholds 116w

Family benefits
189w

Family doctors
Business premises 212w
Home visits 169-70w
Pay 542w
Prescriptions 531w
Teaching hospitals 539w

Family health services authorities
Clwyd 46w
Manpower 46w

Family planning
China 601-2w
Men 541w

Far East
Export promotion 277w

Fares to work scheme
70-2w, 576w

Farm incomes
505-6w
Marginal land 43-4w, 74-6w, 107-10w
Northern Ireland 43-4w
Scotland 74-6w

Fatchett, Mr Derek
Questions
Konver programme 349w, 514w
NHS, Offices 167w
NHS Estate Management & Health Building Agency 171-2w
NHS Management Executive, Manpower 63w
NHS trusts, Property transfer 169w
RECHAR 96w

Faulds, Mr Andrew
Questions
Armed forces housing, Property transfer 525w

Fenner, Dame Peggy
Questions
Milk marketing scheme 508w
VAT, Fruit juices 258-9w

Ferranti
GEC 298w

Ferries
Portaferry 500w

Fertility
Medical treatments 541w

Festivals & special occasions
Cenotaph 202w

Field, Mr Barry
Questions
Light dues 231w
Local government reform, Isle of Wight 104-5w
Prairie dogs, Pest control 312w

Field, Mr Frank
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 466-7
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 363

Field, Mr Frank*—*continued
Questions
Church Commissioners, Expenditure 13
National Portrait Gallery, Public appointments 420w
Parole Board, Contracts of employment 571w
UK companies abroad, South Africa 97w

Financial targets
Post Office 350w

Fine defaulters
Prison population 365w

Fire regulations
Furniture 513w
Government buildings 134w
Northern Ireland 134w
Timber frame housing 530w

Fire services
Finance 175-8w, 376-7w

Fires
St David's Hospital Cardiff 52w

Firth of Clyde
Nuclear accidents 300w
Sewage 73w

Fiscal policy
150

Fish conservation
106-7w
EC action 40w
Irish Sea 106w

Fisher, Mr Mark
Questions
Income tax, Tax yields 255w
MI6, Government buildings 280-1w
Public libraries 308w
Public libraries, Official publications 308w
Public libraries, Opening hours 308w, 448w
Public libraries, Wales 333w
Public Library Service Review 308-9w
Repetitive strain injury 453w
Repetitive strain injury, Medical research 453w
Sarajevo, International assistance 303w
School libraries 408w
Yugoslavia, Redgrave, Vanessa 595w

Fishguard
Trans-European Networks 10w

Fishing
Cancer hazards 512w

Fishing gear
Scotland 447-8w
Seals 447-8w

Fishing vessels
Licensing 311w, 506w
Shipping registration 310w
Wales 310-1w

5 Airborne Brigade
Military vehicles 478w

Flags
Schools 51w, 55w
Wales 51w

Floods
Llandudno 49w

Fluoridation
Northern region 459w

Flynn, Mr Paul
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 396-8
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 537
Ministerial statements, Points of order (04:11:93) 539-40
Questions
Child Support Agency, Social security benefits 390w
Employment opportunities, Wales 7-8
Tax yields 463w
Welsh Office, Ministerial policy advisors 334w

Food from Britain
41w

Food labelling
Genetically modified organisms 313-4w

Football
Netherlands 177-8w

Football Matches (Violent & Disorderly Conduct) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
1R (03:11:93) 371-3

Football (Offences) Act 1991
Questions
Prosecutions 178-80w

Football Spectators Act 1989 (Commencement No 4) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(04:11:93) 554-76

Football Spectators (Designation of Football Matches in England & Wales) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(04:11:93) 554-76

Footwear
Health 541w

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
262w
Cash limits 30-2w
Civil service manpower 30w
Expenditure 29w
Joint public-private sector ventures 88w
Ministers' visits abroad 88-9w

Foreign companies in UK
Land ownership & tenure 503-4w

Foreign investment in UK
Company taxation 463w
Employment opportunities 51w
Japan 340-1
Wales 8, 51w

Foreign patients
NHS trusts 542w

Foreign policy
Haiti 280w
Japan 340-1
Pakistan 281-2w
Taiwan 277w
United Arab Emirates 279-80w

Forestry Commission
251-2w, (03:11:93) 489

Forestry Review Group
Management consultants 152w

Forests
Access to countryside 152w
Air pollution 331w
Europe 331w
Land acquisition 251-2w
Public access (03:11:93) 489
Public petitions (03:11:93) 489
Yorkshire & Humberside 251-2w

Forgery
Postage stamps 348w

Forman, Mr Nigel
Questions
VAT 501-2
Vocational education, Schools 140

Forsyth, Mr Michael, Minister of State for Employment
Questions
Building industry, Death 266-7w
Community action, Take-up 578-9w
Community action, Wales 436
Confederation for the Registration of Gas Installers, Annual reports 577w
Dept of Employment, Civil service manpower 577-8w
Dept of Employment, Joint public-private sector ventures 267-8w
Dept of Employment, Ministers' visits abroad 268-70w

Forsyth, Mr Michael*—*continued
Dept of Employment, Non-departmental public bodies 165-6w
Disablement schemes 70-2w
Employment level, Publishing 266w
Employment opportunities, EC grants & loans 69-70w
European Social Fund, South Yorkshire 158w
Health & Safety Executive, Contracts for services 265w
Health & Safety Executive, Management consultants 265w
Health & Safety Executive, Recruitment 265w
Mine safety 437-8w
Railway Inspectorate, Manpower 438w
Restart programme, Contracts for services 420-33w
Sellafield, Leukaemia 68-70w
THORP, Employment opportunities 266w
THORP, Industrial health & safety 433-4w
Unemployment, Building workers 581w
Unemployment benefits, Social Security benefits rules 265-6w
Workstart 437w

Forth, Mr Eric, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education
Questions
Education, Standard spending assessments 146-7w
Educational publications, Cost per pupil 405-8w
Educational publications, Expenditure 398-406w
Hospital education, Inspections 493w
Hospital education, School closures 493w
Local education authorities, Capital investment 410-8w
School buildings, Asbestos 494w
School buildings, Repairs & maintenance 145-6w, 410w
School libraries 408w
School meals 54-5w
School meals, Expenditure 149w
Schools, Capital investment 135-6
Sex education 495w
Sex education, Parents rights 391-2w
Special education 141-2
Special education, Leicester 140-1
Special schools, Inspections 493w

Foster, Mr Don
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 361
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 301-2w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed forces development 476w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sanctions 302w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, War casualties 302w
British Youth Council, Government grants 29-30w
Grant maintained schools 142-3
London & Bishopsgate International Investment Management, Licensing 466-7w
Montenegro, Sanctions 303w
Sarajevo, Armed conflict 301w
Sarajevo, Electricity distribution 301w
Serbia, Medical equipment 602w
Transcaucasus, Peace negotiations 595w
United Nations, Finance 602w
United Nations, UK contributions 602-3w
Yugoslavia, Armed conflict 302-3w
Yugoslavia, Diplomatic service 303w
Yugoslavia, Peace negotiations 302w

Foster care
170w

Foulkes, Mr George
Debates etc.
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Cervical smears (01:11:93) 126

Fox, Dr Liam
Debates etc.
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 603
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 366

Fox, Dr Liam—continued
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 189, 194
Questions
A369, Road works 231w
Buses, Exhaust emission controls 341-2w
Office of Public Service & Science, Cash limits 25-6w
Unemployment 593

Foyer hostel scheme
139

France
Defence 524w

Franchising
Manchester City Council 208w

Franco-British Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy & Doctrine
299w

Fraser, Mr John
Debates etc.
Football Spectators & Sports Grounds Orders 1993 (04:11:93) 565, 573
Statute Law Repeals Bill (HL), 2R (04:11:93) 591
Questions
Police cautions, Codes of practice 496w

Fraud
Tax havens 559w

Freeman, Rt Hon Roger, Minister for Public Transport
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 38-43, 47, 72-4, 78-80, 89, 98-103, 113-4, 117-8
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 202-4, 222, 241-4, 253-5, 257-62, 273, 286-8
Railways Bills, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 431-3
Questions
British Rail, Privatisation 232w
Bus services, Competition 524w
Buses, Exhaust emission controls 341-2w
Channel tunnel, High speed trains 338w
Channel tunnel, Railway network 89w, 232w, 338w, 522w
Channel tunnel, Railway stations 338w, 522w
Hams Hall power station, Planning permission 89w
Public service vehicles, Criminal records 521w
Public service vehicles, Finance 521-2w
Railtrack, Manpower 336w
Railtrack, Railway safety 336-7w
Railway industry, Sweden 337w
Railway safety, Isle of Wight 340w
Railway stations, Berwickshire 11w
Railway travel, Bicycles 232-3w

Freemasonry
Judges 17-8

French, Mr Douglas
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 537

Fruit juices
VAT 22w, 258-9w, (03:11:93) 452-6, 509-10

Fry, Mr Peter
Questions
Sheep dipping, Organophosphorous pesticides 312-3w

Funding Agency for Schools
144, 150w

Furniture
Fire regulations 513w

Further Education Funding Council for England
Expenditure 150w

Further Education Funding Council for Wales
Expenditure 112-3w

Fyfe, Mrs Maria
Debates etc.
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Cervical smears (01:11:93) 130-1
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 468, 476
Questions
Mental patients, Scotland 247-8w
NHS trusts, Private patients 248w
NHS trusts, Public appointments 73w
Physiotherapists, Manpower 75-8w

Gale, Mr Roger
Questions
Television 310w
Television licences, Fees & charges 309-10w

Gallie, Mr Phil
Questions
Scottish Office, Cash limits 71-3w

Galloway, Mr George
Questions
Human rights, Kuwait 149

Gambling
362-3w

Gardner, Joy
366w

Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Questions
Guatemala, Democracy 336

Garnier, Mr Edward
Debates etc.
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 602-5
Questions
Ministry of Defence, Cash limits 68w
Office of Public Service & Science, Cash limits 90w
Student accommodation, Leicester 137-8

Garrett, Mr John
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 538
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 464

Gas supply industry
Monopolies & Mergers Commission 346w

GATT
(01:11:93) 19-37, 509w, 514w, 559w, 595-6w
European communities 275-6w

Gatwick Airport
523-4w

GCE A level
146w

GEC
298w
Ferranti 298w
Guinness Peat Aviation 344w

General elections
Uganda 601w, 603w

Generic prescribing
216-7w, 531-2w

Genetically modified organisms
Food labelling 313-4w

Genetics
Immigration applications 593-4w

George, Mr Bruce
Questions
Unemployment, Walsall 434w

George Eliot Hospital Nuneaton
Hospital waiting lists 211w

George Finbar Ross
496w

Geriatric patients
Hospital admissions 453w
Iatrogenic illness 453w

Germany
Low flying 129w, 131w, 285w
Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 594w

Germany—continued
Telecommunications technology 234w

Gerrard, Mr Neil
Questions
Driving offences, Death 14w
Driving offences, Disqualifications 13w
EC Free Food Scheme 109-10w
Entry clearances, Overseas workers 235-6w
Overseas workers 173-4w

Gill, Mr Christopher
Debates etc.
Forests, Public petitions (03:11:93) 489
Questions
Corporation tax 470w

Godman, Dr Norman A
Debates etc.
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Cervical smears (01:11:93) 125-30
Questions
Ambulance services, Scotland 451w
Criminal injuries compensation, Scotland 450-1w
Prisoners' transfers, Scotland 14w
Sewage, Waste disposal 73w
Smoking, Medical treatments 243w
VAT, Energy prices 499-500
Victim support schemes, Government grants 451w

Golding, Mrs Llin
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 350

Goode Committee
see Pension Law Review Committee

Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair, Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Questions
Association of South East Asian Nations, Export controls 596-7w
Export promotion, Government assistance 276w
Far East, Export promotion 277w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Cash limits 30-2w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Civil service manpower 30w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Joint public-private sector ventures 88w
Hong Kong, Rhinoceros products 597-8w
Japan, Foreign policy 340-1
Japan, Manufacturing industries 341-2
Japan, Trade barriers 342
Taiwan, Foreign policy 277w
Thailand, Prostitution 28w
USA, Nuclear weapons tests 597w

Gordon, Ms Mildred
Questions
Ethnic minorities, Tower Hamlets 532w

Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 351

Gorst, Mr John
Questions
RAF Hendon, Land acquisition 133w

Government assistance to industry
Aerospace industry 234-6w
Connor Peripherals 239w

Government buildings
Dept of National Heritage 25w
Dept of Trade & Industry 349w
Fire regulations 134w
MI6 280-1w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 253w
Ministry of Defence 474w, 524-5w

Government departments
Telephone services 481w, 560w

Government grants to local authorities
Community care 166w

Government grants to voluntary organisations
Suicide 215w

Government grants to voluntary organisations *—continued*
Youth services 379w

GP fundholders
212w, 216w, 453w, 536w
Drugs 61w
Expenditure 536w
Greater London 211-2w
Health insurance 540w
Hospital consultants 536-7w
North Yorkshire 61w

Graduates
Unemployment 70w

Graham, Mr Thomas
Debates etc.
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Cervical smears (01:11:93) 129-30
Questions
Hazardous wastes, Incinerators 527-8w
Hospitals, Incinerators 449-50w

Grant maintained schools
137-8w, 142-5
Audit 283w
Conferences 282-3w
Essex 145
Finance 138-44w, 282w
Government grants 138-44w, 492-3w
Kent 142-3
Nottinghamshire 409w
Pre-school education 147w
Wales 48w

Grant Maintained Schools Centre
492w, 510w

Greater London
Arts finance 200w
Community care 168w
GP fundholders 211-2w
Hospital closures 539-40w
Hospital patients 60w
Orchestras 23-4w, 97-8w, 201w
Road works 10w
Secure accommodation 168w
Sleeping rough 322-3w
Speed limits 523w
Tax yields 261w
Teaching hospitals 539w
Urban programme 487-8w
Vandalism 237-8w

Greater Manchester
Intensive care 458w

Greater Manchester (Light Rapid Transit System) Bill (HL) 1990/91
Debates etc.
Order to proceed in next session (02:11:93) 133-4

Greenway, Mr Harry
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 349
Questions
Bishops, Pay 12-3
Dept of Trade & Industry, Government buildings 349w
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust, Finance 173w
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust, Manpower 172w
Grant maintained schools 138w
Inflation 464w
Magistrates, Age 14-5
Official engagements 91w
Refugees 279w

Greenway, Mr John
Debates etc.
Football Spectators and Sports Grounds Orders 1993 (04:11:93) 566-70
Questions
British Telecom, Privatisation 513-4
Economic situation 507-8
Greater London 514-5
Life insurance, Taxation 463w

Griffiths, Mr Win
Questions
BC grants & loans, Wales 11
Hospital education, Inspections 493w
Hospital education, School closures 493w
Griffiths, Mr Win *—continued*
Special education 141-2
Special education, Wales 110-2w
Special schools, Inspections 493w

Grocott, Mr Bruce
Questions
City technology colleges 494w
Nursery schools, School population 145w
School leaving, Employment opportunities 139-40

Grylls, Sir Michael
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 32
Railways Bill 1992/93, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 49-52
Questions
Agricultural land 509w

Guatemala
Democracy 336

Guillotine
(02:11:93) 156-316, (03:11:93) 374-418
Railways Bill 1992/93 148-9

Guinness Peat Aviation
GEC 344w

Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn*, Secretary of State for the Environment*
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development, Ministerial statements (04:11:93) 517-27
Questions
Council house sales, Local government revenue 205w
Dept of the Environment, Cash limits 5w
Dept of the Environment, Doyle, Patrick 105w
Dept of the Environment, Joint public-private sector ventures 104w
Dept of the Environment, Non-departmental public bodies 104w
High rise flats 206w
House renovation grants 330w
Housing, Public investment 483w
Housing improvement 330w
Local government reform, Isle of Wight 104-5w
Quarrying, Swindon 328w
Rents 206w
Urban Regeneration Agency 328w

Gun sports
Palace of Westminster 199w

Gunnell, Mr John
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 350
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 42, 67-9, 96-7
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 237-8
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 432
Questions
Belize 335
Children, Maintenance 588w

Gwynedd
Income 11-2

Gypsies
Avon 487w

Habitual offenders
570-1w
Burglary 570w

Haddington
Travel-to-work areas 242-3w

Hague, Mr William*, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Social Security*
Questions
Dept of Social Security,194w
Dept of Social Security, Ministers' visits abroad 274w
Maternity pay 192w
Medical examinations, Fees & charges 586-7w
Hague, Mr William *—continued*
National insurance contributions 590w
National Insurance Fund 269w
National Insurance Fund, Personal pensions 381-2w
Pensioners, Personal income 190-1w
Self-employed, Lewisham 391w
Social security abuse, Lewisham 585-6w
Social security benefits uprating 385-7w
Social security benefits uprating, Index linking 387-8w
Social security payments, Post offices 387w
Social security reciprocal agreements, Australia 81w
Tax credit system 82w

Hain, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Clean Coal Technology, Points of order (03:11:93) 368-9
Questions
Consumer expenditure 464w
Industrial investment, Wales 47w
Postage stamps, Forgery 348w
Postal rates 353w
Student grants 137
Summertime 574w

Haiti
Foreign policy 280w

Hamilton, Mr Neil*, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs*
Questions
Companies House Executive Agency, Contracts for services 348w
Deregulation initiative 344w
Deregulation initiative, Departmental publications 345w
Furniture, Fire regulations 513w
GEC, Guinness Peat Aviation 344w
Ice cream, Monopolies 96w
Implementing legislation, EC law 344w
Monopolies & Mergers Commission, Gas supply industry 346w
Newspaper press, Distributive trade 57w
Newspaper press, Unfair trading practices 512w
Publications, VAT 513w
Schultz, Alexander 518w

Hams Hall power station
Planning permission 89w, 101w

Hanley, Mr Jeremy*, Minister for the Armed Forces*
Questions
Air force, Armed forces deployment 300w
Air force, Armed forces training 477w
Air force, Military exercises 125w
Air routes, Highlands of Scotland 284w
Airships, Defence procurement 286w
Armed forces, Redundancy pay 293w
Armed forces, Vaccination 475w
Armed forces dependants, Maintenance 132w
Armed forces deployment 477w
Armed forces deployment, Belize 472w
Armed forces deployment, Bosnia-Herzegovina 476w
Armed forces housing 290w
Armed forces housing, Construction 132-3w
Armed forces housing, Property transfer 525w
Armed forces married quarters, Pirbright 294w
Armed forces strength, Civil service manpower 291w
Armed forces training, Paraguay 132w
Chemical weapons, Vaccination 476w
Defence expenditure 471w
Defence expenditure, EC countries 477w
Defence land, Land values 290w
Digital mapping 291-2w
Dominie aircraft 287w
5 Airborne Brigade, Military vehicles 478w
Franco-British Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy & Doctrine 299w
Harrier aircraft, Air accidents 288-9w
Hart, David, Ministry of Defence 477-8w
Imphal Barracks York, Offices 132w
Iraq-Kuwait conflict, Armed forces casualties 526w

Hanley, Mr Jeremy—continued
Iraq-Kuwait conflict, Vaccination 475-6w
Jaguar aircraft, Decommissioning 286w
Low flying 65w, 283-4w, 472w
Low flying, Air displays 66w
Low flying, Air safety 127-8w
Low flying, Air traffic control 65-6w, 128w, 284-5w
Low flying, Aircraft noise 66w
Low flying, Civil service manpower 130w
Low flying, Complaints 283w, 285w
Low flying, Germany 129w, 131w, 285w
Low flying, Harrier aircraft 126-7w, 129w
Low flying, Highlands of Scotland 65w, 128w
Low flying, Italy 131w
Low flying, Military aircraft 125-6w, 128-9w
Low flying, Military exercises 283w
Low flying, Night flying 65w, 283w
Low flying, Norway 129-30w
Low flying, Professional qualifications 284-5w
Low flying, RAF Lossiemouth 125w
Low flying, RAF St Mawgan 126w, 129w
Low flying, RAF Tain 126w
Low flying, Tornado aircraft 287w
Low flying, Turkey 131w
Military aircraft, Air accidents 287w
Military aircraft, Aircraft noise 130-1w
Military aircraft, Airmisses 288w
Military aircraft, Armed forces deployment 285-6w
Military aircraft, Noise control 286w
Military aircraft, Radar 284w
Military exercises, North America 289-90w
Mines, Bomb disposal 474w
Ministry of Defence, Consultants 294w
Ministry of Defence, Government buildings 474w, 525w
Ministry of Defence, Joint public-private sector ventures 133w
NATO Nuclear Planning Group 299w
NATO Nuclear Planning Group, Nuclear non proliferation 299w
Nuclear accidents, Firth of Clyde 300w
Nuclear weapons 298w
Open Skies Proposals 286-7w
Operation Deny Flight 67-8w
Pindar project, Construction costs 525w
Pregnancy, Armed forces discharges 478w
Public Record Office, Asbestos 292w
RAF Fairford, Air accidents 290w
RAF Fairford, Air displays 66-7w
RAF Hendon, Land acquisition 133w
RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine, Defence contracts 288w
RAF Lakenheath, F15 Aircraft 287w
RAF Lossiemouth, Armed forces deployment 287w
Submarines, Shipping accidents 474-5w
Tornado aircraft, Air accidents 131w, 287w
US bases 292-3w
War crimes, Falkland Islands 525w
WE 177 nuclear bomb 299-300w
World War I, Armed forces punishment 472w

Hanson, Mr David
Questions
Beef premiums, Wales 336w
Cattle, Wales 510w
Sheep premiums, Wales 331w

Hardy, Mr Peter
Questions
Driving offences, Recreation spaces 17w
Employment opportunities, EC grants & loans 69-70w
Mine safety 437-8w
School buildings, Repairs & maintenance 145w

Hare Coursing (No 2) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
1R (02:11:93) 153-5

Harman, Ms Harriet
Questions
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept for Education 149-50w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept of Employment 267-8w

Harman, Ms Harriet—continued
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept of Health 172w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept of National Heritage 201-2w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept of Social Security 194w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept of the Environment 104w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept of Trade & Industry 95w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Dept of Transport 233w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 88w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Home Office 186w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 253-4w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Ministry of Defence 133w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Office of Public Service & Science 90w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Scottish Office 244-6w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Treasury 118w
Joint public-private sector ventures, Welsh Office 111w
Public sector borrowing requirement 561-2w
Tax allowances, Share option scheme 119w
VAT, Energy prices 506

Harrier aircraft
285-6w
Air accidents 288-9w
Low flying 126-7w, 129w

Harris, Mr David
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 521
Questions
Counterfeit manufacturing, Audio recordings 233-4w
Far East, Export promotion 277w

Hart, David
Ministry of Defence 477-8w

Harvey, Mr Nick
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 488
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 51-3
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 182, 192-4, 213-4, 233-4
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 428-9
Questions
Air force, Armed forces training 477w
British Rail, Privatisation 232w
Railway travel, Bicycles 232-3w
Standard spending assessments 324w

Harwich
Trans-European Networks 10w

Hashemi, Mohammed
480w, 515w, 525w

Hawkins, Mr Nick
Questions
Countryside, Surveys 327w
Educational policy 149-50
Hotel & catering industry, EC action 95w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 329

Hayes, Mr Jerry
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 485

Hazardous wastes
Incinerators 527-8w

Heald, Mr Oliver
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 388, 390, 394
Members' interests, Points of order (04:11:93) 540
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 605

Heald, Mr Oliver—continued
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 362
Waste disposal, Letchworth (04:11:93) 618-20
Questions
Council of Ministers 304-7w

Health
Footwear 541w
Heating 540w

Health Advisory Service
334-5w

Health & Safety Executive
64-5w, 68-70w, 433-4w
Contracts for services 265w
Early retirement 156w
Management consultants 265w
Recruitment 265w

Health authorities
Public meetings 538-9w

Health education
Smoking 210-1w

Health Education Authority
210-1w

Health Education Council
210-1w

Health hazards
Sheep dipping 33w
VAT 213w

Health insurance
540w
GP fundholders 540w

Health physics
205w, 538w

Health Service Commissioner
(04:11:93) 588

Health Service Commissioners Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
2R* & rem stages* (04:11:93) 588
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Health service staff
Diabetes 215w
Manpower 458w
NHS trusts 542w
Pay review bodies 543w
South East region 535w

Health services
541w
East London 547w

Hearing aids
544w

Heart pacemakers
454w, 532-3w

Heathcoat-Amory, Mr David, Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Questions
Belize 335-6
Belize, Armed forces deployment 336
Belize, Sovereignty 87w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Overseas aid 339-40
China, Nuclear weapons tests 594w
Council of Ministers 304-7w
Cyprus, Peace negotiations 279w
Cyprus, UN resolutions 279w
Eastern Europe, EC aid 339
Eastern Europe, EC enlargement 280w
Eastern Europe, Manufacturing industries 340
Eastern Europe, Overseas trade 340
EC Committee of the Regions 597w
European Free Trade Association, EC accession 331-2
European Parliament committees 596w
GATT 596w
GATT, European communities 275-6w
Guatemala, Democracy 336
Multilateral Trade Organisation 595-6w
Nuclear weapons tests 597w
Peru, Diplomatic relations 593w

Heathcoat-Amory, Mr David—continued
Peru, Human rights 593w
St Helena, Work permits 599w
Subsidiarity 304w
Sweden, Jews 88w
Turkey, Kurds 598-9w

Heathrow Airport
342-3w, 594w

Heating
Health 540w

Henderson, Mr Doug
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 527
Questions
Local education authorities, Capital investment 410-8w
Unemployment, Graduates 70w

Hendron, Dr Joe
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 31

Hendry, Mr Charles
Questions
British Youth Council, Government grants 29w
Taiwan, Foreign policy 277w

Heppell, Mr John
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 38, 63-5
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 160, 165, 183, 188-91, 264, 279-81

Hereford
Road construction 522-3w

***Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael**, President of the Board of Trade*
Questions
Dept of Trade & Industry, Cash limits 58w, 353w

Hicks, Mr Robert
Questions
A38, Road works 12w
Armed forces training, Paraguay 132w
Fish conservation 106-7w
Newspaper press, Distributive trade 57w
Overseas aid, Paraguay 136w
Social security benefits, Investment income 82w

Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 470-2
Questions
Road construction, Departmental correspondence 342w
VAT, Energy prices 500

High rise flats
206w

High speed trains
Channel tunnel 338w

Higher Education Funding Council for England
Expenditure 150w

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
Expenditure 112-3w

Higher pension premium
385-7w

Highland Health Board
440-6w

Highlands & Islands Enterprise
246w
Expenditure 245w

Highlands of Scotland
Air routes 284w
Low flying 65w, 128w

Highways Agency
524w
Managers 232w

Hill, Mr James
Questions
VAT, Newspaper press 505

Hill, Mr Keith
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 49, 53-4
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 228-31

Hill livestock allowances
106w
Marginal land 506w
Northern Ireland 42-4w

Hinchliffe, Mr David
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 349
Questions
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 33-6w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Isle of Man 35-6w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Mink 34w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Northern Ireland 135w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Offal 34w
Cattle 36-40w
Child protection committees 456-7w
Child protection committees, Local government expenditure 456w
Child safety 457w
Children, Migration 63w, 147, 276w, 454-5w
Council housing finance 329w
Criminal records, Vetting 574w
Housing benefits, Young people 456w
Housing finance 329-30w
NHS trusts, Mentally handicapped 63-4w
Resettlement, Publications 63w
Social Fund, Administrative costs 83w
Social security, Administrative costs 82-3w
Social security, Advisory bodies 592w
Social security benefits, Publicity 187-8w
Social security benefits, Take-up 81-2w
Tax credit system 82w
Teachers, Child safety 409w
VAT, Energy prices 465w

History education
Northern Ireland 148w

HM Fire Service Inspectorate
Public appointments 575w

HM Inspectorate of Pollution
64-5w

HM Inspectorate of Probation
(04:11:93) 588

Hoey, Ms Kate
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 34
Questions
Arms exports 474w
Mines, Bomb disposal 474w
Speech therapy, Expenditure 543w

***Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas**, Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office*
Questions
Armenia, Sanctions 303-4w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry, Disclosure of information 301w
Belgium, Human rights 327-8
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 276-7w, 301-2w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Peace negotiations 88w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sanctions 302w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, War casualties 302w
Council of Europe, Human rights 328
EC countries, Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 594w
European Convention on Human Rights 87w
Germany, Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 594w
Indonesia, Human rights 328-9

Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas—continued
Iraq, Arms exports 279w
Iraq, Marsh Arabs 328
Jamaica, Human rights 328
Mafia, Proceeds of Crime 87w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 278w, 332-3
Montenegro, Sanctions 303w
Poland, Air transport 594w
Refugees 279w
Russia, Democracy 275w
Russia, Elections 30w
Sarajevo, Armed conflict 301w
Sarajevo, Electricity distribution 301w
Sarajevo, International assistance 303w
Sellafield, Nuclear non proliferation 281w
Slovakia, Diplomatic service 599w
Transcaucasus, Peace negotiations 595w
Turkey, Human rights 275w
Turkey, Kurds 598w
UNESCO 28w, 595w
United Arab Emirates, Foreign policy 279-80w
Western Sahara, Peace negotiations 280w
Yugoslavia, Armed conflict 302-3w
Yugoslavia, Democracy 88w
Yugoslavia, Diplomatic service 303w
Yugoslavia, Peace negotiations 302w
Yugoslavia, Redgrave, Vanessa 595w

Home helps
Wales 332w

Home Office
Joint public-private sector ventures 186w
Non-departmental public bodies 185w

Home Robertson, Mr John
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 35
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 57-60
Questions
A1, Speed limits 449w
Armed forces housing, Construction 132-3w
Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, USA 418w
EC countries, Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 594w
5 Airborne Brigade, Military vehicles 478w
Local government reform, Berwickshire 153w
Local government reform, East Lothian 74w
Local government reform, Scotland 154w
Mining, East Lothian 243w
Nuclear accidents, Firth of Clyde 300w
Nuclear weapons tests 417w
Nuclear weapons tests, China 417-8w
Railway stations, Berwickshire 11w
Summertime 16-8w
Travel-to-work areas, Haddington 242-3w

Home visits
Family doctors 169-70w

Homelessness
205w
Cardiff 3-5
Law reform 2w
Local government functions 2w
Wales 3-4

Homicide
Mental patients 453w
Scotland 527w

Hong Kong
Rhinoceros products 597-8w

Honours
Jones, Reginald Victor 479-80w

Hoon, Mr Geoffrey
Questions
Poultry, Animal welfare 252-3w

Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 30-1
Members' pensions (04:11:93) 548-50
Questions
National Audit Office, Fees & charges 85w

Horses
505w

Hospices
Children 537w
Hospital beds 537w

Hospital admissions
214w
Geriatric patients 453w

Hospital beds
166w
Hospices 537w

Hospital closures
539-40w
Greater London 539-40w
Mental hospitals 543w

Hospital consultants
Cancer 539w
Career structure 62w
GP fundholders 536-7w
Merit awards 214w, 500w, 511w, 529w, 538w
Northern Ireland 500w
Opportunity 2000 59w
Per capita costs 530-1w
Scotland 529w
Wales 511w
Women 59w

Hospital education
Inspections 493w
School closures 493w

Hospital patients
AIDS 220w
Greater London 60w
Southend Health Care NHS Trust 60w

Hospital waiting lists
212w
Breast cancer 540w
George Eliot Hospital Nuneaton 211w
Scotland 530w
Wales 511w

Hospitals
Birmingham 60w
Blaenau Gwent 5
Fees & charges 540-1w
Government grants 168w
Incinerators 449-50w
Listed buildings 98-9w
Performance standards 460w

Hostages
Middle East 330

Hotel & catering industry
EC action 95w

House of Commons
85w
Cost effectiveness 86w

House of Commons accommodation
86w
Members' facilities 362w

House of Commons annunciator system
197w

House of Commons broadcasting
360-1w
Members' facilities 439w

House of Commons catering
Members' facilities 362w

House of Commons questions
(04:11:93) 577-88
POLIS 198w

House of Commons times of sittings
361w

House of Lords
480w, 513

House prices
Average earnings 466w

House renovation grants
207w, 330w
Wales 248w

Housing
Capital investment 482-4w
Lone parents 487w
Public investment 246-7w, 483w

Housing—continued
Scotland 246-7w
Supplementary credit approvals 319-20w

Housing action trusts
Brent 207-8w
Expenditure 103w
Liverpool 100-1w, 202w

Housing association grant
483-4w

Housing Association Tenants' Ombudsman
327w

Housing Association Tenants' Ombudsman for Scotland
449w

Housing associations
Capital investment 320-2w
Housing construction 7w
Lancashire 7w
Public meetings 489-90w
Rents 483-4w

Housing benefits
189-91w, 591w
Earnings rules 271w
Scotland 382-6w
Scottish Homes 382-6w
Social security recipients 591w
Young people 456w

Housing construction
Housing associations 7w
Tyne & Wear 206w

Housing Corporation
327w, 329-30w
Government grants 321-2w

Housing estates
Security guards 183w

Housing finance
260w, 329-30w

Housing improvement
330w
Lancashire 329w

Housing insulation
Wales 7

Housing investment programmes
483w

Housing market
463w

Housing Renovation Etc Grants (Grant Limit) (Amendment) Order 1993
Questions
207w, 248w

***Howard, Rt Hon Michael**, Secretary of State for the Home Department*
Questions
Fire services, Finance 175-8w, 376-7w
HM Fire Service Inspectorate, Public appointments 575w
Home Office, Joint public-private sector ventures 186w
Home Office, Non-departmental public bodies 185w
Life imprisonment, Judgments 379-80w
"MI5 the Security Service" 571w
Police pensions, Expenditure 174w
Political offences, Wales 380w
Prison Ombudsman, Public appointments 378-9w
Statewatch 186w

Howarth, Mr George
Questions
Cancer hazards, Chrysoidine 214w, 512w

Howells, Dr Kim
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 386
Questions
Exhaust emissions, Motor vehicle testing 11w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 278w

Howells, Dr Kim—continued
VAT, Fruit juices 22w

Hoyle, Mr Doug
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 469-70
Questions
Railways Bill, Guillotine 148-9
Wymott Prison, Prison riots 367w

Hughes, Mr Kevin
Questions
Child Support Agency 79-80w

Hughes, Mr Robert
Questions
South Africa, Elections 326-7

Hughes, Mr Roy
Questions
Ministers' visits abroad, Dept of Employment 268-70w
Ministers' visits abroad, Dept of Health 222-4w
Ministers' visits abroad, Dept of Social Security 274w
Planning permission, Newport Borough Council 10
Unemployment, Newport 47w

Hughes, Mr Simon
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 485
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 413-4
European Council (01:11:93) 36
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 460
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 605-7, 610
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 522
Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993 (03:11:93) 452-3
Questions
Church Commissioners, Investment 44-5w
Coal mining, Wales 46w
Health physics 538w
Prisoners, Families 13w
Russia, Seals 598w
Sellafield, Radiation hazards 492w, 548w
South Africa, Elections 327
THORP, Public inquiries 491w
Urban programme, Greater London 487-8w

Human rights
Belgium 327-8
Council of Europe 328
India 90w
Indonesia 328-9
Jamaica 328
Kuwait 149
Peru 593w
Turkey 275w
Vietnam 56w

Hume, John
(01:11:93) 19-37, 134w

Hume, Mr John
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 26

***Hunt, Rt Hon David**, Secretary of State for Employment*
Questions
Youth training, Expenditure 438-9w

Hunter, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 33
Questions
Angola, Armed conflict 603w
Angola, Arms embargoes 603w
Angola, Peace negotiations 603w
Community action 581w
Community action, Take-up 578-9w
Enterprise Ulster 500w
Nigeria, Politics & government 277w
Tax allowances, Railway travel 560w
Training & enterprise councils, Finance 579-80w

Hunter, Mr Andrew—continued
Training & enterprise councils, Performance standards 578w
Training & enterprise councils, Wales 511w
Training for Work 581w

Hunter aircraft
10w

***Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas**, Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs*
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina 337-8
British Youth Council, Government grants 338-9
Damascus Declaration 330
EC external relations 336-7
EC external relations, Voting methods 338
EC Foreign Affairs Council 337
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Ministers' visits abroad 88-9w
Malta, Ministers' visits abroad 276w
MI6, Government buildings 280-1w
Middle East, Hostages 330
Middle East, Peace negotiations 329-31
Palestinians, Refugees 330
Russia, Politics & government 275w
Sarajevo, EC aid 337
South Africa, Democracy 326
South Africa, Elections 326-7

Hutton, Mr John
Questions
Defence procurement 300w
Defence procurement, Austria 300w
Franco-British Joint Commission on Nuclear Policy & Doctrine 299w
Ministry of Defence, Government buildings 525w
NATO Nuclear Planning Group 299w
NATO Nuclear Planning Group, Nuclear non proliferation 299w
Nuclear weapons 298w
Nuclear weapons tests 298w
Trade competitiveness 464w
WE 177 nuclear bomb 299-300w

Hydrochlorofluorocarbons
Air pollution control 489w

Hypothermia
Death 212-3w, 456w
Elderly 456w

Iatrogenic illness
Geriatric patients 453w

Ibbs Report
85w

Ice cream
Monopolies 96w

Illsley, Mr Eric
Debates etc.
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 456
Questions
Educational standards, Disclosure of information 146w
European Social Fund, South Yorkshire 158w
House of Commons catering, Members' facilities 362w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 346w

Imitation guns
179w

Immigrants
Cyprus 479w

Immigration applications
Genetics 593-4w
Medical treatments 572-3w
Somalia 571-2w
Yugoslavia 572-3w

Immobilisation of vehicles
Private property 573w

Imphal Barracks York
Offices 132w

Implementing legislation
EC law 344w

Import of live animals
Brucellosis 40w

IMS Limited
Export credit guarantees 234w

Ince B power station
Air pollution control 2-3w

Incinerators
Hazardous wastes 527-8w
Hospitals 449-50w
Scotland 449-50w, 527-8w

Income support
Earnings rules 271w
Literacy 78w
Mortgage relief 194w
Mortgages 272w
Social security benefits reductions 78w, 192w
Social security recipients 192-3w

Income tax
254-6w
Personal income 116w
Tax allowances 115w, 548-50w
Tax free income 257w
Tax yields 255w
Taxpayers 20w

Independent Living 1993 Fund
Chronically sick 77w
Social security claims 77-8w

Index linking
Social security benefits uprating 387-8w

India
Human rights 90w

Indirect taxation
507
Tax burden 20w

Indonesia
Human rights 328-9

Industrial accidents
Building industry 266-7w

Industrial development
Northern Ireland 354w

Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland
354w

Industrial finance initiative
558-9w

Industrial health & safety
Leukaemia 68-70w
THORP 433-4w

Industrial injuries scheme
Coal mining 591-2w

Industrial investment
Wales 47w

Industrial Research & Technology Unit
354w

Industrial Tribunals
69-70w

Inflation
464w

Influenza
Vaccination 459w, 543-4w

INFORM
Government grants 379w

Information technology
British Aerospace 297-8w

Infrastructure
Lebanon 520w

Inland Revenue
Civil service manpower 258w

Institute of Freshwater Ecology
327w

Institute of Terrestrial Ecology
327w

Integrated schools
Northern Ireland 353-4w

Intensive care
Children 458w
Greater Manchester 458w

Interest charges
Manufacturing industries 502

Interest payments
187w, 272w, 466w

Interest rates
510

Inter-Institutional Agreement
113w

International assistance
Sarajevo 303w
Yugoslavia 602w

International Atomic Energy Agency
347w, 518w

International conferences
Cancer 171w, 322w
Dept of the Serjeant at Arms 86w
Radioactive waste disposal 324w

International Investments
Criminal investigation 496w

International Military Services
294w

International Planned Parenthood Federation
601w
UK contributions 602w

Intervention stocks
510w
Butter 504-5w

Invalidity benefits
Social security benefits disqualification 270-1w
Social security recipients 186-7w
Taxation 121w, 257w

Inverclyde Royal Hospital
Cervical cancer (01:11:93) 126-32

Investment
Church Commissioners 44-5w

Investment income
Social security benefits 82w

Investors in people
Training & enterprise councils 157-8w

Iraq
Arms exports 279w
Export licences 518-9w
Marsh Arabs 328

Iraq-Kuwait conflict
475w
Armed forces casualties 526w
Vaccination 475-6w

Irish Sea
Fish conservation 106w

Iron & steel industry
EC action 520w

Irvine Development Corporation
240w

Isle of Man
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 35-6w

Isle of Wight
Local government reform 104-5w
Railway safety 340w

Israel
Arab boycott 329

Italy
Low flying 131w

Ivory
(03:11:93) 490-8

***Jack, Mr Michael**, Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food*
Questions
Agricultural land 509w
Agricultural subsidies, Expenditure 507w
Agricultural Wages Board, Inspections 106w
Agricultural Wages Board, Manpower 106w
Arable area payments scheme 509w
Cattle 36-40w
Drift nets 313w
EC Free Food Scheme 109-10w
Environmentally sensitive areas 33w, 36w
Farm incomes 505-6w
Fish conservation 106-7w
Fish conservation, EC action 40w
Fishing vessels, Licensing 311w, 506w
Fishing vessels, Shipping registration 310w
Forests, Land acquisition 251-2w
Hill livestock allowances 106w
Intervention stocks 510w
Irish Sea, Fish conservation 106w
Milk marketing scheme 508-9w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Civil service manpower 41w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Government buildings 253w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Joint public-private sector ventures 253-4w
Organic farming, Agricultural subsidies 507-8w
Pigs, Agricultural subsidies 508w
Sea pollution, Radioactive waste disposal 253w
Sea pollution, Waste disposal 41-2w, 313w
Sheep premiums 311-2w
Wheat, Agricultural production 314-6

Jackson, Ms Glenda
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 88-9
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 164, 180, 184, 198-9, 215, 239-40, 266, 277-9
Questions
Lone parents, Housing 487w

Jackson, Mrs Helen
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 349
Questions
Fares to work scheme 576w
Maternity payments, Adoption 194w
Russia, Democracy 275w
VAT 461w

Jaguar aircraft
67w, 285-6w
Decommissioning 286w

Jamaica
Human rights 328

Jamieson, Mr David
Questions
Devonport dockyard, Privatisation 132w
Grant maintained schools, Finance 138-44w
Schools, VAT 136w

Janner, Mr Greville
Questions
Crime, Leicester 237w
Leicestershire Constabulary, Finance 182w
Magistrates 15
Security guards, Housing estates 183w
Security industry, Licensing 183-4w
Special education, Leicester 140-1

Japan
Foreign investment in UK 340-1
Foreign policy 340-1
Manufacturing industries 341-2
Trade barriers 342

Jenkin, Mr Bernard
Questions
Eastern Europe, EC aid 339
Subsidiarity 304w

Jessel, Mr Toby
Questions
Judges 17

Jet aircraft
Air accidents 9-10w

Jews
Sweden 88w

Johnston, Sir Russell
Questions
Smoking, Lost working days 452w
Smoking related diseases, Expenditure 452w
Tobacco duties, Tax yields 256-7w

Joint Intelligence Committee
282w, 480w

Joint public-private sector ventures
Dept for Education 149-50w
Dept of Employment 267-8w
Dept of Health 172w
Dept of National Heritage 201-2w
Dept of Social Security 194w
Dept of the Environment 104w
Dept of Trade & Industry 95w
Dept of Transport 233w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 88w
Home Office 186w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 253-4w
Ministry of Defence 133w
Office of Public Service & Science 90w
Scottish Office 244-6w
Treasury 118w
Welsh Office 111w

Jones, Mr Barry
Questions
Manufacturing industries, Wales 47w
Roads, Wales 11
Schools, Flags 51w, 55w

***Jones, Mr Gwilym**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Welsh Office*
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 378, 398-401
Questions
Alzheimer's disease, Wales 50w
Children in care, Wales 47-8w
Commission for Local Administration in Wales 10
Council housing, Wales 10-1
Domestic energy conservation, Wales 6-7
Family health services authorities, Manpower 46w
Floods, Llandudno 49w
Home helps, Wales 332w
Homelessness, Cardiff 4-5
Homelessness, Wales 3-4
Hospital consultants, Merit awards 511w
House renovation grants, Wales 248w
Housing insulation, Wales 7
Llandudno General Hospital, Acute beds 333w
Mental health services, South Glamorgan 334-5w
Morriston Hospital 332w
NHS trusts, Management consultants 51w
NHS trusts, Wales 332w
Planning permission, Newport Borough Council 10
Secure accommodation, Wales 51-2w
Suicide, Mental patients 334w

Jones, Mr Ieuan Wyn
Questions
A5, Road works 49w
Social Fund, Ynys Mon 271-4w

Jones, Mr Jon Owen
Questions
Homelessness, Wales 3-4

Jones, Dr Lynne
Questions
Bus services, Competition 524w
Community care, Ombudsman 535w
Hospitals, Birmingham 60w
Local government revenue 324w
Mental health community care 533w
Taxis, Birmingham 523w

Jones, Mr Martyn
Questions
Family health services authorities, Manpower 46w
Social Security Benefits Agency, Clothing 585w

Jones, Reginald Victor
Honours 479-80w

Jones, Mr Robert B
Questions
Taxation, Administrative costs 561w

Jordan
Defence contracts 295-6w
Export licensing 519w

Jowell, Ms Tessa
Questions
Childbirth 166w
Community care, Finance 166w
Community care, Government grants to local authorities 166w
Community care, Transitional arrangements 166w, 168w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Chronically sick 77w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Social security claims 77-8w
Youth training, National vocational qualifications 155w

Jubilee line
Private investment 339w
Railway stations 339-40w

Judges
15, 17
Accountability 16
Freemasonry 17-8
Manpower 45-6w
Performance appraisal 16

Judgments
Life imprisonment 379-80w

Judiciary
Northern Ireland 14
Public appointments 14

Junior hospital doctors
Working hours 60w

Juries
16

Kashmir
Religious buildings 599w
UN resolutions 599-600w

Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 522-3
Questions
Jamaica, Human rights 328

Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 112

Kent
Grant maintained schools 142-3

Kenya
Overseas aid 26w

***Key, Mr Robert**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Transport*
Questions
A1, Road construction 225-6w
A1-M1 link, Road construction 388w
A38, Road works 12w
A369, Road works 231w
Bridges, Bromford 340w
Bridges, Estuaries 340-1w
Company cars 520w
Driving tests, Bradford 232w
Exhaust emissions, Motor vehicle testing 11w
Highways Agency, Managers 232w
Lead free petrol 11w
M25, Road traffic 10w
M62, Motorways 8w
M62, Road construction 8-9w
M62, Road traffic 8-9w, 343w
Motor vehicle testing, Inspections 337w
Motorway service areas, Thurrock 11-2w
Ragwort, Weed control 343w
Road construction 523w
Road construction, Compensation 225w

Key, Mr Robert—continued
Road construction, Departmental correspondence 342w
Road construction, Hereford 522-3w
Road construction, Land acquisition 233w
Road construction, Lowestoft 341w
Road construction, Pennines 523w
Road construction, Sites of special scientific interest 339w
Road haulage licences, Criminal records 337w
Trans-European Networks, Harwich 10w
Vehicle Inspectorate, Privatisation 521w
Vehicle Inspectorate, Sick leave 337-8w
Wing bypass, Planning compensation 229w

Khan, Amanullah
327-8, 572w

Kilfoyle, Mr Peter
Questions
Cyprus, Peace negotiations 279w

Kirkwood, Mr Archy
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 123
Questions
Beef premiums, Scotland 440w
Local government reform, Berwickshire 153w
Maintenance, Children 581-3w
Sheep premiums, Scotland 152-3w
Travelling people, Scotland 450w

Kleinwort Benson
515-6w

Knight, Mrs Angela
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 486
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 538
Questions
Child Support Agency 78-9w
Company taxation, Foreign investment in UK 463w
Eastern Europe, EC enlargement 280w

Knight, Dame Jill
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 348
Questions
Broadcasting controls, Terrorism 147

Know-how fund
26w

Knox, Sir David
Questions
EC external relations 376-7
Voluntary organisations, Government grants 46w

Konver programme
96w, 349w, 514w, 516w

Kurds
275w
Turkey 598-9w

Kuwait
Human rights 149

Kynoch, Mr George
Questions
Caledonian MacBrayne, Capital investment 242w
Sports, Non-domestic rates 241-2w

Laboratories
National Rivers Authority 489w

Labour market
581w

Labour Party
Wales 3

Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Questions
Local government services, Legal profession 328-9w

Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 24

Lancashire
Chemists shops, 536w
Housing associations 7w
Housing improvement 329w
Post offices 346-7w

Land acquisition
Forests 251-2w
RAF Hendon 133w
Railway network 233w
Road construction 233w

Land drainage
Llandudno 49w

Land ownership & tenure
504w
Foreign companies in UK 503-4w
Scotland 529w
Statistics 197w

Land pollution
Pollution control 326-7w

Land registration
197w

Land use
Church property 45w

Land values
Defence land 290w

Lang, Rt Hon Ian, Secretary of State for Scotland
Questions
Devolution, Scotland 73-4w
Non-departmental public bodies, Scotland 447w
Nursery schools, Scotland 447w
Prisons, Scotland 243w
Scottish Office, Cash limits 71-3w
Scottish Office, Civil service manpower 71w
Scottish Office, Joint public-private sector ventures 244-6w
Scottish Office, Non-departmental public bodies 450w
Smoke alarms, Scotland 154w
Sports, Non-domestic rates 241-2w

Languages education
136-7
Ethnic minorities 146

Law reform
Homelessness 2w

Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Questions
HM Fire Service Inspectorate, Public appointments 575w
INFORM, Government grants 379w
Judges 15
Life imprisonment, Judgments 379-80w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 333

Lead free petrol
11w

Lebanon
Infrastructure 520w
UK companies abroad 520w

Leeds
Offices 167w

Legal aid scheme
319w
Expenditure 318-9w

Legal costs
Ministers 56w, 282w

Legal profession
Local government services 328-9w

Leicester
Crime 237w
Special education 140-1
Student accommodation 137-8

Leicestershire Constabulary
Finance 182w

Lennox-Boyd, Mr Mark, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Questions
Angola, Armed conflict 333-5, 603w

Lennox-Boyd, Mr Mark—continued
Angola, Arms embargoes 603w
Angola, Overseas aid 239w
Angola, Peace negotiations 603w
BBC External Services, Government grants 28w
Bilateral aid 604w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Overseas aid 605-6w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Overseas students 598w
British Council, Public appointments 592-3w
British residents abroad, Prisoners 28w
British Youth Council, Government grants 29-30w
Children, Migration 276w
"Children of Despair" 602w
China, Family planning 601-2w
Commonwealth Institute, Finance 27w
Cultural relations, Wales 593w
Haiti, Foreign policy 280w
Immigration applications, Genetics 593-4w
International Planned Parenthood Federation, UK contributions 602w
Kashmir, Religious buildings 599w
Kashmir, UN resolutions 599-600w
Kenya, Overseas aid 26w
Malaysia, Aid financed trade 239w
Nigeria, Politics & government 277w
Overseas aid 135-6w
Overseas aid, Education 604-5w
Overseas aid, Paraguay 136w
Overseas workers, Domestic service 596w
Pakistan, Foreign policy 281-2w
Partnerships for change 136w
Peru, Overseas aid 27w
Philippines, Visas 87w
Poland Hungary assistance for economic restructuring 26w
Russia, Seals 598w
Serbia, Medical equipment 602w
Somalia, Overseas aid 239w
South Africa, Democracy 278-9w
Tourist information, Egypt 27-8w
Uganda, Elections 600-1w
Uganda, General elections 601w, 603w
Uganda, Overseas aid 600w
United Nations, Finance 602w
United Nations, UK contributions 602-3w

Lestor, Miss Joan
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 353-4

Letchworth
Clinical wastes (04:11:93) 618-24
Waste disposal (04:11:93) 618-24

Leukaemia
Industrial health & safety 68-70w
Sellafield 68-70w

Lewis, Mr Terry
Questions
Housing market 463w

Lewisham
Employment opportunities 434w
Marriage of convenience 455w
Self-employed 391w
Social security abuse 585-6w
Social security claims 391w
Vacancies 434-6w
VAT registration 465-6w

Liability for animals
Dogs 574w

Lidington, Mr David
Questions
A1, Road construction 225-6w
Broadcasting controls, Terrorism 576w
European Social Fund 148
Export promotion, Government assistance 276w
Wing bypass, Planning compensation 229w

Life imprisonment
Judgments 379-80w

Life insurance
Taxation 463w

Light dues
231w

Lilley, Rt Hon Peter, Secretary of State for Social Security
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee, Ministerial statements (03:11:93) 356-67

Limited list prescribing
Zemaphyte 539w

Listed buildings
Hospitals 98-9w

Lister Hospital
Pathology 455-6w

Literacy
146, 155-6w
Income support 78w
Trade competitiveness 94w
Unemployment 156w

"Literacy Education & Training"
21w

Litherland, Mr Robert
Questions
School buildings, Repairs & maintenance 146w

Liverpool
Housing action trusts 100-1w, 202w

Livingstone, Mr Ken
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 421
Questions
Personal injury compensation, Road accidents 573w
Traffic lights, Cameras 523w

Llandudno
Floods 49w
Land drainage 49w

Llandudno General Hospital
Acute beds 333w

Lloyd, Mr Peter, Minister of State, Home Office
Questions
Category A prisoners, Costs 366w
Civil defence, Finance 175-6w
Doncaster Prison, Contracts for services 375w
European Parliament constituencies, Wales 569w
Fine defaulters, Prison population 365w
Gambling 362-3w
INFORM, Government grants 379w
Parole Board, Contracts of employment 571w
Prison population 179-82w
Prison visits 575w
Prison visits, Security 575w
Prisoners, Crime 363w
Prisoners, Crimes of violence 236-7w
Prisoners, Families 13w
Prisoners' home leave 238w
Prisoners' transfers, Scotland 14w
Prisons, Construction 19w
Prisons, Privatisation 12-3w
Prisons, Ships 183w
Summertime 16-8w, 363w, 574w
Women's prisons, Childbirth 14-5w
Women's prisons, Pregnant women 14w
Wymott Prison, Prison accommodation 368-9w
Wymott Prison, Prison population 369w
Wymott Prison, Prison riots 367w
Wymott Prison, Sexual offences 367-8w
Youth custody 179w
Youth services, Government grants to voluntary organisations 379w

Lloyd, Mr Tony
Questions
Student grants 138

Llwyd, Mr Elfyn
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 65
Questions
Air force, Military exercises 125w
Air routes, Highlands of Scotland 284w
Jaguar aircraft, Decommissioning 286w

Llwyd, Mr Elfyn—continued
Low flying 65w, 283-4w
Low flying, Air displays 66w
Low flying, Air safety 127-8w
Low flying, Air traffic control 65-6w, 128w, 284-5w
Low flying, Aircraft noise 66w
Low flying, Civil service manpower 130w
Low flying, Complaints 283w
Low flying, Harrier aircraft 126-7w
Low flying, Highlands of Scotland 65w, 128w
Low flying, Military aircraft 125-6w, 128-9w
Low flying, Military exercises 283w
Low flying, Night flying 65w, 283w
Low flying, Professional qualifications 284w
Low flying, RAF Lossiemouth 125w
Low flying, RAF St Mawgan 126w, 129w
Low flying, RAF Tain 126w
Military aircraft, Aircraft noise 130-1w
Military aircraft, Armed forces deployment 285-6w
Military aircraft, Noise control 286w
Military aircraft, Radar 284w
National parks, Wales 47w

Lobsters
447-8w

Local education authorities
398w
Capital investment 410-8w
Local government reform 149w

Local enterprise companies
245-6w, 530w

Local Enterprise Development Unit
354w

Local Goverament Commission for England
105w

Local government expenditure
Child protection committees 456w

Local government finance
Wales 48w, 335w

Local government functions
Air pollution control 207w
Building regulations 326w
Homelessness 2w

Local Government International Bureau
69-70w

Local government reform
204w, 485w
Avon 4-5w
Berwickshire 74w, 153w
Costs 527w
East Lothian 74w
Finance 7w
Isle of Wight 104-5w
Local education authorities 149w
North Yorkshire 4w
Scotland 154w, 527w
Wales 48w

Local government revenue
102w, 324w, 487-8w
Council house sales 205w

Local government services
203w
Contracts for services 328-9w
Legal profession 328-9w

Local government staff
Public expenditure 554-6w

London & Bishopsgate International Investment Management
Licensing 466-7w

London Implementation Group
171w

London Regional Transport
339-40w

Lone parents
Housing 487w
Social security recipients 391w

Long stay patients
247-8w

Lords amendments
497-8w

Lost working days
Mental illness 455w
Sick leave 455w
Smoking 452w

Lot, Airlines
342-3w, 594w

Lothian Health Board
529w

Low flying
65w, 283-4w, 472w
Air accidents 66-7w, 288-9w
Air displays 66w
Air safety 127-8w
Air traffic control 65-6w, 128w, 284-5w
Aircraft noise 66w
Civil service manpower 130w
Complaints 283w, 285w
Germany 129w, 131w, 285w
Harrier aircraft 126-7w, 129w
Highlands of Scotland 65w, 128w
Italy 131w
Military aircraft 125-6w, 128-9w
Military exercises 283w
Night flying 65w, 283w
Norway 129-30w
Professional qualifications 284-5w
RAF Chivenor 126w
RAF Lossiemouth 125w
RAF St Mawgan 126w, 129w
RAF Spadeadam 126w
RAF Tain 126w
Tornado aircraft 287w
Turkey 131w

Low incomes
381w
Marginal tax rates 77w

Low pay
158-64w
Part-time employment 162w

Lowestoft
EC grants & loans 513-4w
Road construction 341w
Schools 407w

Loyden, Mr Eddie
Questions
Royal Liverpool University Hospital NHS Trust 534-5w

Luff, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 123, (03:11:93) 487
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 535-6
Railways Bill 1992/93, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 47
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 235-7
Questions
Local Government Commission for England 105w
Prisoners, Crimes of violence 236-7w

Lung diseases
Medical equipment 215w

Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas, Attorney-General
Debates etc.
Statute Law Repeals Bill (HL), 2R (04:11:93) 594
Questions
Crimes of violence, Prosecutions 316w
Criminal proceedings, Peterlee 495-6w
Crown Prosecution Service 315w
International Investments, Criminal investigation 496w
Nazi war crimes, Prosecutions 315-6w
Police cautions, Codes of practice 496w
Prosecutions 315w
Theft, Archaeological sites 8w

Lynne, Ms Liz
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 347
Questions
Education, Ethnic minorities 145w

M4
332w

M5
Road works 231w

M25
Road traffic 10w

M50
10w

M62
Motorways 8w
Road construction 8-9w
Road traffic 8-9w, 343w

McAllion, Mr John
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 121
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 536
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 40, 54-8, 94-6, 103
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 196
Questions
Criminal statistics, Scotland 154w
VAT zero rating 462w
Victim support schemes, Scotland 243-4w

McCrea, Rev William
Questions
Road construction, Northern Ireland 134w

Macdonald, Mr Calum
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Overseas aid 339-40

McFall, Mr John
Debates etc.
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Cervical smears (01:11:93) 127-8

McGrady, Mr Eddie
Questions
Agricultural development programme, Northern Ireland 42w

***MacGregor, Rt Hon John**, Secretary of State for Transport*
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 156-67, 177-8, 201, 211-20, 262-7, 269-70
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 419-24
Questions
Dept of Transport, Cash limits 89w
Dept of Transport, Joint public-private sector ventures 233w
Transport supplementary grants 226-31w

McKelvey, Mr William
Questions
Cyprus, Peace negotiations 279w

Mackinlay, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 603
Pardon for Soldiers of the Great War (No. 2) Bill, 1R (03:11:93) 370
Statute Law Repeals Bill (HL), 2R (04:11:93) 591-4
Questions
Air routes, USA 521w
Air transport, Poland 342-3w
Airlines, Licensing 343-4w
Methane, Tipping of waste 6w
Motorway service areas, Thurrock 11-2w
Poland, Air transport 594w
Student loans, Administrative delays 494w
Tipping of waste, EC action 5-6w
World War I, Armed forces punishment 472w

***Maclean, Mr David**, Minister of State, Home Office*
Questions
Burglary 373-5w

***Maclean, Mr David**—continued*
Burglary, Habitual offenders 570w
Cars, Crime 377-8w
Crime, Leicester 237w
Criminal proceedings, Costs 376w
Driving offences, Death 14w
Driving offences, Disqualifications 13w
Durham Constabulary, Police cautions 364w
Football (Offences) Act 1991, Prosecutions 178-80w
Habitual offenders 570-1w
Imitation guns 179w
Immobilisation of vehicles, Private property 573w
Miscarriages of justice 574-5w
Personal injury compensation, Road accidents 573w
Police cautions 364-5w
Secure accommodation, Criminal justice liaison committees 17-8w
Secure training centres, Contracts for services 18-9w
Sexual offences, Children 563-8w
Suicide 236w
Taking & driving away, Road accidents 184w
Vandalism, Greater London 237-8w
Young offenders, Administration of justice 375-6w
Young offenders, Prison sentences 575w
Youth courts, Administrative delays 372-4w

Maclennan, Mr Robert
Questions
Juries 16

***McLoughlin, Mr Patrick**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Trade & Industry*
Debates etc.
Post offices, Pitsea (02:11:93) 320-4
Questions
Aerosols, Air pollution control 352w
British Approvals Board for Telecommunications, Directors 352w
Cancer hazards, Chrysoidine 512w
Carbon dioxide, Air pollution 94w
Companies, Debts 515w
Counterfeit manufacturing, Audio recordings 233-4w
EC grants & loans 514w
Environment protection, Packaging 330w
Hotel & catering industry, EC action 95w
Konver programme 516w
National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies 517-8w
Office of Telecommunications, Cash limits 349w
One stop shop initiative 512w
Packaging, EC action 93w
Post Office, Capital investment 350w
Post Office, External financing limits 350w
Post Office, Financial targets 350w
Post Office, Manpower 350-1w
Post Office, Privatisation 515-6w
Post offices, Pendle 346-7w
Postage stamps, Forgery 348w
Postal rates 353w
Postal rates, OECD countries 515w
Textile industry, EC grants & loans 513w

Madden, Mr Max
Questions
Belgium, Human rights 327-8
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Overseas aid 605-6w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Overseas students 598w
Education, Ethnic minorities 136
Immigration applications, Medical treatments 572-3w
Khan, Amanullah 572w

Madel, Mr David
Questions
Cabinet Office, Cash limits 57w

Mafia
Proceeds of Crime 87w

Magherafelt bypass
134w

Magistrates
15
Age 14-5

***Magistrates**—continued*
Young offenders 14-5

Magistrates' courts
18
Administration of justice 318w

Mahon, Mrs Alice
Questions
Health hazards, VAT 213w
Hospital admissions 214w
Hypothermia, Death 212-3w
Junior hospital doctors, Working hours 60w
NHS, Energy prices 168w, 452w
Patients, Expenditure 213w

Maintenance
Armed forces dependants 132w
Children 80-1w, 84w, 132w, 147-8, 194-6w, 390w, 581-5w, 587-90w
Debt collection 196w
Departmental forms 194-5w

Maitland, Lady Olga
Questions
Challenger tanks, Defence procurement 131w
Custodial treatment, Northern Ireland 42w
Religious education, Curriculum 54w
Satellite broadcasting, Sexual deviancy 24w

***Major, Rt Hon John**, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service*
Debates etc.
European Council, Ministerial statements (01:11:93) 19-37
Questions
Adoption 511
Anglo-Irish talks 513
Bristow, Desmond 90-1w
Bristow, Desmond, Publications 480w
British Rail, Privatisation 512-3
British Telecom, Privatisation 513-4
Broadcasting controls, Terrorism 147
Cabinet Office, Cash limits 57w
Chequers, Security 92w
Children, Migration 147
Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, USA 418w
Cyprus 419w
Economic and monetary union 419-20w
Educational policy 149-50
Employment opportunities, Chester 149
Etiquette 513
European Agency for Safety & Health at Work 419w
European Council 479w
European Social Fund 148
Fiscal policy 150
Greater London 514-5
Hashemi, Mohammed 480w
House of Lords 480w, 513
Human rights, Kuwait 149
Human rights, Vietnam 56w
Immigrants, Cyprus 479w
India, Human rights 90w
Joint Intelligence Committee 282w, 480w
Jones, Reginald Victor, Honours 479-80w
Maintenance, Children 147-8
Ministers, Legal costs 56w, 282w
National Portrait Gallery, Public appointments 420w
Northern Ireland 512
Northern Ireland government, Referenda 419w
Nuclear weapons tests 417w
Nuclear weapons tests, China 417-8w
Official engagements 91w, 419w
Party conferences, Speeches 56w, 480w
Political parties, Northern Ireland 511-2
Prime Minister, Manpower 481w
Prime Minister, Official cars 481-2w
Prime Minister's Policy Unit, Manpower 420w
Prisons, Ships 150
Railways Bill 516
Railways Bill, Guillotine 148-9
Social security abuse 512
Squatting, Sentencing 516
Telephone services, Government departments 481w
10 Downing Street 92w

Major, Rt Hon John*—*continued
10 Downing Street, Repairs & maintenance 91-2w
UNESCO 479w
VAT, Energy prices 150-2, 514
Water charges 515

Malaysia
Aid financed trade 239w
Air force bases 295w
Arms trade 295w

Mallon, Mr Seamus
Questions
Anglo-Irish talks 513

Malta
Ministers' visits abroad 276w

Management consultants
Forestry Review Group 152w
Health & Safety Executive 265w
NHS trusts 51w, 223-5w

Managers
Highways Agency 232w
NHS trusts 168-9w

Manchester
Schools 135-6

Manchester City Council
Franchising 208w

Manchester Royal Infirmary
544w

Mandelson, Mr Peter
Questions
Banks, Offshore funds 121w
British Youth Council, Government grants 338-9
Capital gains tax 114-5w
Educational standards 139
Land ownership & tenure 504w
Land ownership & tenure, Foreign companies in UK 503-4w
Land ownership & tenure, Scotland 529w
Land ownership & tenure, Statistics 197w
Land registration 197w
National debt, Offshore funds 466w
Offshore trusts 113-4w
Privatisation, Fees & charges 467-8w
Tax avoidance 556w
Tax credits 470-1w
Tax havens, Fraud 559w
Taxation, Debts written off 115-6w

Manufacturing industries
502
Eastern Europe 340
Interest charges 502
Japan 341-2
Wales 47w

Marek, Dr John
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 123-4
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 158, 185-7
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 38, 97-8, (03:11:93) 419
Questions
Police, Finance 377w
Welsh Office, Public appointments 47w

Marginal land
Farm incomes 43-4w, 74-6w, 107-10w
Hill livestock allowances 506w

Marginal tax rates
Low incomes 77w
Social security & taxation 188-90w

Marine Technology Support Unit
516w

Marlow, Mr Tony
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 484
House of Commons Chamber, Points of order (04:11:93) 541
Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993, Points of order (03:11:93) 369

Marlow, Mr Tony*—*continued
Questions
Cattle diseases 311w
Child Support Agency, Pay incentives 590w
EC Cohesion Fund 468-9w
Economic and monetary union 419-20w
European Agency for Safety & Health at Work 419w
Pregnancy, Armed forces discharges 478w
VAT 506
War crimes, Falkland Islands 525w
Wheat, Agricultural production 314-6

Marriage of convenience
Lewisham 455w

Marsh Arabs
Iraq 328

Marshall, Mr Jim
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 33

Marshall, Mr John
Debates etc.
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 447
Questions
Armed forces housing 290w
Armed forces strength, Civil service manpower 291w
Clergy, Pensions 45w
Council tax, Barnet 204w
Defence land, Land values 290w
Employment level, Publishing 266w
Foreign investment in UK, Employment opportunities 51w
Foreign investment in UK, Wales 8
Middle East, Hostages 330
Oil industry, Overseas trade 95w
Publications, VAT 513w
Publishing, EC countries 512-3w
Rape, Privacy 16
Social security benefits uprating, Index linking 387-8w
Sweden, Jews 88w
VAT, Publications 551-2w

Marshall, Sir Michael
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 533
Parliamentary questions (04:11:93) 582-3

Martin, Mr Michael J
Questions
All party groups 86w
Members, Training 199-200w
Order paper 198-9w
Palace of Westminster, Photography 199w
Vote bundle 198w
Vote bundle, Costs 85w

Martlew, Mr Eric
Questions
Intervention stocks 510w

Mass media
Trials 15-6

Maternity pay
192w

Maternity payments
Adoption 194w

Maternity services
Northern Ireland 42w

Mawhinney, Dr Brian*, *Minister for Health
Questions
Amoxycillin, Prescriptions 59w
Breast cancer, Surgery 540w
Chemists shops, Lancashire 536w
Contraceptives, Chemists shops 537-8w
Dept of Health, Ministers' visits abroad 222-4w
Dept of Health, Non-departmental public bodies 538-9w
Doncaster Healthcare NHS Trust, Resignations 211w
Eye disorders, Medical treatments 534w
Eye tests, Northern region 546w

Mawhinney, Dr Brian*—*continued
Family doctors, Home visits 169-70w
Family doctors, Pay 542w
Family doctors, Prescriptions 531w
Fluoridation, Northern region 459w
Foreign patients, NHS trusts 542w
Generic prescribing 216-7w, 531-2w
George Eliot Hospital Nuneaton, Hospital waiting lists 211w
GP fundholders 212w, 216w, 453w, 536w
GP fundholders, Drugs 61w
GP fundholders, Expenditure 536w
GP fundholders, Greater London 211-2w
GP fundholders, Hospital consultants 536-7w
Health insurance, GP fundholders 540w
Health service staff, Manpower 458w
Health service staff, NHS trusts 542w
Health service staff, Pay review bodies 543w
Health services, East London 547w
Hospital closures, Greater London 539-40w
Hospital consultants, Cancer 539w
Hospital consultants, Career structure 62w
Hospital consultants, Merit awards 214w, 538w
Hospitals, Performance standards 460w
Intensive care, Children 458w
Junior hospital doctors, Working hours 60w
London Implementation Group 171w
Lung diseases, Medical equipment 215w
Medical education, Cancer 541w
Medical examinations, Social security benefits 460w
NHS, Racial discrimination 535w
NHS & private practice 170-1w
NHS charges 542-3w
NHS Corporate Management Task Force 218-9w
NHS internal market 544-5w
NHS review, Expenditure 543w
NHS trusts, Management consultants 223-5w
NHS trusts, Managers 168-9w
NHS trusts, Pay 537w
NHS trusts, Professional misconduct 213w
Patients, Complaints 460-2w
Prescription charges 535-6w
Prescription charges, Expenditure 536w
Prescription drugs, Packaging 171w
Prescriptions 536w
Prescriptions, Costs 536w
Primary health care 59-60w, 452w
Public appointments, Doncaster 61w
Regional health authorities, Finance 533-4w
Regional health authorities, Manpower 460w, 547w
Royal Victoria Infirmary & Associated Hospitals NHS Trust, Ophthalmic services 217w
Teaching hospitals, Family doctors 539w
Zernaphyte, Limited list prescribing 539w

Maxwell companies
466-7w

Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick*, *Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Questions
Anglo-Irish talks 134w
Authorised investigators, Codes of practice 359w
Northern Ireland government 355w

McGoogan Inquiry
see Cervical Smear Test Inquiry

Meacher, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 529-30
Questions
Public lavatories 487w

Means tested benefits
Social security recipients 590-2w

Medical audit
215-6w

Medical education
Cancer 541w

Medical equipment
Decommissioning 221w
Lung diseases 215w

***Medical equipment**—continued*
Montenegro 602w
Radiotherapy 221w
Serbia 602w

Medical examinations
Fees & charges 586-7w
Social security benefits 460w

Medical records
Privacy 542w

Medical research
Anorexia 451w
Bulimia 451w
Repetitive strain injury 453w

Medical Research Council
451w

Medical treatments
Codes of practice 542w
Eye disorders 534w
Fertility 541w
Immigration applications 572-3w
Smoking 243w, 452w

Members
Training 199-200w
Word processors 198w

Members' facilities
199w
House of Commons accommodation 362w
House of Commons broadcasting 439w
House of Commons catering 362w

Members' pay
(03:11:93) 457-84

Members' pensions
(04:11:93) 542-53

Members' visits abroad
EC institutions 362w

Men
Family planning 541w

Mental health
Unemployment 581w

Mental health community care
533w
Northern Ireland 356w

Mental health services
South Glamorgan 334-5w

Mental hospitals
Hospital closures 543w

Mental illness
Lost working days 455w

Mental patients
Homicide 453w
Patient's Charter 534w
Scotland 247-8w
Suicide 334w, 453w, 459w, 501w, 528w

Mentally handicapped
NHS trusts 63-4w

Merchant, Mr Piers
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 408

Mergers
EC law 344w

Merit awards
Hospital consultants 214w, 500w, 511w, 529w, 538w

Merseyside
EC grants & loans 234w
Taking & driving away 184w

Methane
Coal mine closures 517w
Thurrock 6w
Tipping of waste 6w, 11-2w

Metropolitan Police
575-6w
Manpower 184-5w

"MI5 the Security Service"
571w

MI6
Government buildings 280-1w

Michael, Mr Alun
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 375-6, 382-4, 387-8, 392-3, 397, 411
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 447
Questions
Burglary 373-5w
Cars, Crime 377-8w
Criminal Justice Act 1993 575-6w
Criminal proceedings, Costs 376w
Crown courts, Administration of justice 317-8w
Police, Disclosure of information 375w
Police cautions 364-5w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 369-72w
Prisons, Construction 19w
Young offenders, Administration of justice 375-6w
Young offenders, Prison sentences 575w
Youth courts, Administrative delays 372-4w

Michie, Mr Bill
Questions
Maintenance, Children 80-1w
Manufacturing industries 502

Michie, Mrs Ray
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 196
Questions
Foreign patients, NHS trusts 542w
Medical examinations, Fees & charges 586-7w
Medical examinations, Social security benefits 460w

Middle East
Hostages 330
Peace negotiations 278w, 329-33

Migration
Children 63w, 147, 276w, 454-5w, 499w

Milburn, Mr Alan
Questions
Council house sales 488w
Council housing, Capital investment 320w
Eye tests, Scotland 74w
Health service staff, Manpower 458w
Homicide, Scotland 527w
Hospitals, Performance standards 460w
House prices, Average earnings 466w
Hypothermia, Death 456w
NHS trusts, Management consultants 51w, 223-5w
NHS trusts, Scotland 244w
Patients, Complaints 460-2w
Regional health authorities, Manpower 460w
Suicide, Mental patients 334w, 459w, 501w, 528w

Military aircraft
Air accidents 287w
Aircraft noise 130-1w
Airmisses 288w
Armed forces deployment 285-6w
Low flying 125-6w, 128-9w
Noise control 286w
Radar 284w

Military exercises
Air force 125w
Low flying 283w
North America 289-90w

Military vehicles
5 Airborne Brigade 478w

Milk marketing scheme
508-9w

Millenium Fund
24w

Miller, Mr Andrew
Questions
Housing Association Tenants' Ombudsman 327w
Housing Association Tenants' Ombudsman for Scotland 449w
Sheltered housing 325w

Milligan, Mr Stephen
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 170, 175, 180-5
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 429
Questions
British Rail, Privatisation 512-3

Mills, Mr Iain
Questions
Maintenance, Children 583w

Mine safety
437-8w

Mines
Arms exports 513w
Bomb disposal 474w

Minesweepers
Arms trade 67w

Mining
East Lothian 243w
Environmental impact assessment 491w

Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993
Debates etc.
(03:11:93) 457-84

Ministerial policy advisors
Welsh Office 334w

Ministerial speeches
524w

Ministerial statements
Adoption (03:11:93) 343-55
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 528-38
European Council (01:11:93) 19-37
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 356-67
Public service (04:11:93) 528-38
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 517-27
Republic of Ireland (01:11:93) 19-37

Ministers
Legal costs 56w, 282w
Pay (03:11:93) 457-84

Ministers' visits abroad
Dept of Employment 268-70w
Dept of Health 222-4w
Dept of Social Security 274w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 88-9w
Malta 276w

Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food
Cash limits 39-40w
Civil service manpower 41w
Government buildings 253w
Joint public-private sector ventures 253-4w

Ministry of Defence
290-1w
Cash limits 68w
Civil servants 133w
Civil service manpower 524-5w
Consultants 294w
Government buildings 474w, 524-5w
Hart, David 477-8w
Joint public-private sector ventures 133w
Manpower 472-3w
Next steps initiative 124w

Mink
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 34w

Miscarriages of justice
574-5w

Mitchell, Mr Austin
Questions
Barristers, Public appointments 503w

Mitchell, Sir David
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 230-2, 237
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 426-7

Monopolies
Ice cream 96w

Monopolies & Mergers Commission
96w
Gas supply industry 346w

***Monro, Sir Hector**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office*
Questions
Agriculture, Census 449w
Ancient monuments, Architectural conservation 151-2w
Arable area payments scheme, EC countries 448-9w
Arable area payments scheme, Scotland 528-9w
Beef premiums, Scotland 440w
Dounreay, Nuclear reactors 529w
Farm incomes, Marginal land 74-6w
Forestry Review Group, Management consultants 152w
Forests, Access to countryside 152w
Forests, Air pollution 331w
Hazardous wastes, Incinerators 527-8w
Public footpaths, Rannoch Moor 447w
Public libraries, Opening hours 448w
Seals, Fishing gear 447-8w
Sewage, Waste disposal 73w
Sheep premiums, Scotland 152-3w, 447w

Montenegro
Medical equipment 602w
Sanctions 303w

Morgan, Mr Rhodri
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 376-82, 384, 391-6, 398, 400
Questions
Cardiff Airport 3
Cardiff Bay 510w
Cardiff Bay Development Corporation 511w
Companies House Executive Agency, Contracts for services 348w
Export Credits Guarantee Department 96w
Mental health services, South Glamorgan 334-5w
St David's Hospital Cardiff, Fires 52w
Secure accommodation, Criminal justice liaison committees 17-8w
Secure accommodation, Wales 51-2w
Secure training centres, Contracts for services 18-9w

Morley, Mr Elliot
Questions
Badgers, Pest control 252w
Forestry Review Group, Management consultants 152w
Seals, Fishing gear 447-8w

Morris, Rt Hon Alfred
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 124
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 537
Members' pensions (04:11:93) 546-8, 552
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 464
Questions
Alcoholic drinks duties, Beer 464-5w
Alcoholic drinks duties, Tax evasion 465w
Hospital closures 539w
Influenza, Vaccination 459w
Intensive care, Children 458w
Intensive care, Greater Manchester 458w
Manchester City Council, Franchising 208w

Morris, Ms Estelle
Questions
Housing associations, Rents 484w
School buildings, Asbestos 494w
Tax allowances, Private sector housing 560w

Morris, Rt Hon John
Questions
Iron & steel industry, EC action 520w

Morriston Hospital
332w

Mortgage relief
116-7w, 549w
Income support 194w

Mortgages
Council house sales 101w
Income support 272w

Motor vehicle testing
Exhaust emissions 11w
Inspections 337w

Motor vehicle theft
Crime prevention 365w

Motorway service areas
Thurrock 11-2w

Motorways
M62 8w

Mount Banking Corporation
Company liquidations 20w

Mudie, Mr George
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 524

Mullin, Mr Chris
Questions
Birmingham six 319w, 366w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 276w
Category A prisoners, Costs 366w
Educational standards 145w
Judges, Freemasonry 17-8
Mines, Arms exports 513w
Sleeping rough, Greater London 322-3w
VAT 505

Multilateral Trade Organisation
595-6w

Murphy, Mr Paul
Questions
Homelessness, Cardiff 4-5

National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies
517-8w

National Audit Office
Fees & charges 85w

National Confidential Inquiry into Perioperative Deaths
215-6w

National debt
Offshore funds 466w

National income
464w

National insurance contributions
590w
Debts written off 260w

National Insurance Fund
269w
Personal pensions 381-2w

National lottery
25w, 200w
Sports 24-5w

National parks
Wales 47w

National Portrait Gallery
Public appointments 420w

National Radiological Protection Board
538w

National Rivers Authority
Laboratories 489w

National savings
552-4w

National vocational qualifications
Youth training 155w

NATO
130-1w, 276w

NATO countries
471w

NATO Nuclear Planning Group
299w
Nuclear non proliferation 299w

Nature conservation
Elephants (03:11:93) 490-8

Nazi war crimes
Prosecutions 315-6w

***Needham, Mr Richard**, Minister for Trade*
Questions
European economic area 93w
European Free Trade Association Surveillance Authority 99-100w
Export Credits Guarantee Department 96w
Export licensing, Iraq 518-9w
Export licensing, Jordan 519w
GATT 514w
Hashemi, Mohammed 515w
IMS Limited, Export credit guarantees 234w
Mines, Arms exports 513w
St Helena, Balance of trade 514w
Telecommunications technology, Germany 234w
UK companies abroad, Lebanon 520w
UK companies abroad, South Africa 97w

***Nelson, Mr Anthony**, Economic Secretary to the Treasury*
Questions
Bank notes 21w
Banks 19-20w
Banks, Offshore funds 121w
Central Statistical Office, Cash limits 21w
Consumer expenditure 464w
Economic situation, OECD countries 260w
European Monetary Institute 555w
European Monetary Institute, Manpower 555w
GATT 559w
House prices, Average earnings 466w
Housing market 463w
Industrial finance initiative 558-9w
Inflation 464w
London & Bishopsgate International Investment Management, Licensing 466-7w
Manufacturing industries 502
Manufacturing industries, Interest charges 502
Mount Banking Corporation, Company liquidations 20w
National savings 552-4w
Offshore trusts 114w
Public expenditure, Civil servants 554-6w
Shipbuilding 502-3
Small businesses, Profits 464w
Trade competitiveness 464w
Treasury, Cash limits 21-2w
Treasury, Civil servants' business appointments 559w

Netherlands
Football 177-8w

Neubert, Sir Michael
Questions
Single sex schools 148w
Tax yields, Greater London 261w
VAT, Building industry 510-1

New businesses
465-6w

New towns development corporations
Scotland 151w

Newcastle General Hospital
AIDS 220w

Newcastle upon Tyne
Road construction 225w
Student accommodation 206w

Newport
Unemployment 47w

Newport Borough Council
Planning permission 10

Newspaper press
Distributive trade 57w
Prices 556w
Unfair trading practices 512w
VAT 505

***Newton, Rt Hon Tony**, Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons*
Debates etc.
Business statements (01:11:93) 119-24, (03:11:93) 483-7

Newton, Rt Hon Tony—continued
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 400-1
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 447
Members' pensions (04:11:93) 542-53
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 457-61
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 595-8, 613-4
Parliamentary questions (04:11:93) 577-80, 588
Questions
House of Commons broadcasting 360-1w
House of Commons broadcasting, Members' facilities 439w
House of Commons times of sittings 361w
Lords amendments 497-8w
Members' visits abroad, EC institutions 362w
Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund 496-8w

Newtownstewart bypass
134w

Next steps initiative
Ministry of Defence 124w

NHS
Energy prices 168w, 452w
Offices 167w
Racial discrimination 535w

NHS administration
Regional health authorities 217w

NHS & private practice
170-1w

NHS charges
542-3w

NHS complaints
Scotland (04:11:93) 588

NHS Corporate Management Task Force
218-9w

NHS Estate Management & Health Building Agency
171-2w

NHS Ethnic Health Unit
210w

NHS finance
64w, 166w

NHS internal market
209-10w, 453w, 544-5w

NHS Management Executive
452w, 544w
Manpower 63w

NHS review
Expenditure 543w

NHS trusts
Foreign patients 542w
Health service staff 542w
Management consultants 51w, 223-5w
Managers 168-9w
Mentally handicapped 63-4w
Pay 537w
Private patients 248w
Professional misconduct 213w
Property transfer 169w
Public appointments 73w
Scotland 73w, 244w, 248w
Wales 51w, 332w

Nicholls, Mr Patrick
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 349
Business questions (03:11:93) 487
European Council (01:11:93) 33
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 477-8
Questions
National Audit Office, Fees & charges 85w

Nicholson, Mr David
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 160, 172, 181-2, 226

Nicholson, Mr David—continued
Questions
Bovine tuberculosis, South West region 506-7w
Cattle diseases 311w
Defence expenditure 471w
Digital mapping 291-2w
Furniture, Fire regulations 513w
GCE A level 146w
Grant maintained schools 137-8w
Income support, Literacy 78w
Literacy 155-6w
Maintenance, Children 589w
Mental patients, Suicide 453w
Small businesses, Profits 464w
Trade competitiveness, Literacy 94w
Unemployment, Educational qualifications 156w
Unemployment, Literacy 156w
War crimes, Falkland Islands 365w

Nicholson, Miss Emma
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 467-9
Questions
Child Support Agency, Performance standards 80w
Iraq, Marsh Arabs 328

Nigeria
Politics & government 277w

Night flying
Low flying 65w, 283w

Noise & Statutory Nuisance Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Noise control
Military aircraft 286w

Non-departmental public bodies
Dept for Education 494w
Dept of Employment 165-6w
Dept of Health 538-9w
Dept of National Heritage 97w
Dept of the Environment 104w, 489-90w
Dept of Trade & Industry 351-2w
Home Office 185w
Northern Ireland Office 264-5w
Public meetings 97w, 104w, 165-6w, 185w, 246w, 351-2w, 450w, 494w
Scotland 447w
Scottish Office 151w, 246w, 450w

Non-domestic rates
Scotland 241-2w
Sports 241-2w

Non-fossil fuel obligation
517w

Norris, Mr Steve, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Transport
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 107-9, 111-3, 117
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 172
Questions
Air accidents, Jet aircraft 9-10w
Air routes, USA 521w
Air transport, Poland 342-3w
Aircrew, Licensing 9w
Airlines, Licensing 343-4w
Dept of Transport, Civil service manpower 12w
Gatwick Airport 523-4w
Jubilee line, Private investment 339w
Jubilee line, Railway stations 339-40w
Light dues 231w
Road works, Greater London 10w
Shipping, Government assistance 520w
Taxis, Birmingham 523w
Taxis, Railway stations 12w
Traffic lights, Cameras 523w
Transport of radioactive materials 8w, 342w

North America
Military exercises 289-90w

North Hertfordshire NHS Trust
455-6w

North Korea
Nuclear safeguards 347w

North London railway line
522w

North Wales Police
380w

North Yorkshire
GP fundholders 61w
Local government reform 4w

Northern Ireland
Agricultural development programme 42w
Ancient monuments 134w
Authorised investigators 359w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 135w
Building industry 264w
Children 499w
Community relations 355w
Custodial treatment 42w
Day care of children 356-7w
Farm incomes 43-4w
Fire regulations 134w
Hill livestock allowances 42-4w
History education 148w
Hospital consultants 500w
Industrial development 354w
Integrated schools 353-4w
Judiciary 14
Maternity services 42w
Mental health community care 356w
Pensions (04:11:93) 588
Political parties 511-2
Psychiatric nurses 498w
Radiation hazards 499-500w
Respite care 497w
Road accidents 135w
Road construction 134w
Security 357-60w
Sheep premiums 44w
Suckler cow premiums 44w
Suicide 501w
Terrorism 357-60w
Unemployment 135w, 262-3w

Northern Ireland government
355w
Referenda 419w

Northern Ireland Health & Social Services Boards
Public appointments 498-9w

Northern Ireland Maternity Unit Study Group
42w

Northern Ireland Office
Civil servants' background 262w
Non-departmental public bodies 264-5w
Official hospitality 356w

Northern region
Economic situation 348w
Eye tests 546w
Fluoridation 459w

Norway
Low flying 129-30w

Notifiable diseases
Viral haemorrhagic disease 219w

Nottinghamshire
Grant maintained schools 409w

Nuclear accidents
Firth of Clyde 300w

Nuclear fuel reprocessing
Sellafield 346w

Nuclear non proliferation
EC countries 569w
NATO Nuclear Planning Group 299w
Sellafield 281w

Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty
347w
EC countries 594w
Germany 594w

Nuclear power
Air pollution control 94-5w
Exports 347w

Nuclear reactors
Dounreay 529w
EURATOM 93-4w

Nuclear safeguards
Inspections 518w
North Korea 347w

Nuclear weapons
298w

Nuclear weapons tests
298w, 417w, 597w
China 417-8w, 594w
USA 597w

Nursery schools
144
Pupil-teacher ratios 143
School population 145w
Scotland 447w

Nurses
Career structure 60-1w
Manpower 547w

Nurses' training
171w

Nursing homes
Closures 168w

O'Brien, Mr William
Questions
Building regulations, Local government functions 326w
Confederation for the Registration of Gas Installers, Annual reports 577w
Day care of children, Northern Ireland 356-7w
Education, Standard spending assessments 146-7w
Eye disorders, Medical treatments 534w
Local government reform 485w
Local government services 203w
Standard spending assessments 101-2w, 203-4w
VAT 462w

Offal
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 34w

Office of Gas Supply
3w
Cash limits 58w

Office of Population Censuses & Surveys
Cash limits 61-2w

Office of Public Service & Science
Cash limits 25-6w, 90w
Joint public-private sector ventures 90w

Office of Telecommunications
Cash limits 349w

Office of the National Lottery
25w

Offices
Imphal Barracks York 132w
Leeds 167w
NHS 167w

Official cars
Prime Minister 481-2w

Official engagements
91w, 419w

Official hospitality
Northern Ireland Office 356w
Prime Minister 25w

Official publications
Public libraries 308w

Official report
502-3w

Off-licences
EC internal trade 553w

Offshore funds
529w
Banks 121w

Offshore funds—continued
National debt 466w

Offshore safety
Government grants 516w

Offshore Supplies Office
516w

Offshore trusts
113-5w, 503-4w, 556w

O'Hara, Mr Edward
Questions
VAT, Energy prices 150-2

Oil industry
Overseas trade 95w

Olympia & York
339w

Ombudsman
Community care 535w

One stop shop initiative
512w

O'Neill, Mr Martin
Questions
Electricity generation 517w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 517w

Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Questions
Aerosols, Air pollution control 204w, 352w
Armed forces married quarters, Pirbright 294w
Local government reform, Finance 7w
Ragwort, Weed control 343w
River pollution, Coal mine closures 7w

Open Skies Proposals
286-7w

Opencast mining
Planning permission 7w

Opening hours
Public libraries 308w, 448w

Operation Bitter Bust
283w

Operation Deny Flight
67-8w

Ophthalmic services
Royal Victoria Infirmary & Associated Hospitals NHS Trust 217w

Oppenheim, Mr Phillip
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 534

Opportunity 2000
Hospital consultants 59w

Opposition parties
Finance (04:11:93) 595-617

Oral contraceptives
Prescriptions 169w

Orange juice
258-9w

Orchestras
Arts Council grants 23-4w, 98w
Greater London 23-4w, 97-8w, 201w
Income 97-8w

Order paper
198-9w

Ordination of Women (Financial Provisions) Measure 1993
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Organic aid scheme
507w

Organic farming
Agricultural subsidies 507-8w

Organophosphorous pesticides
33w
Sheep dipping 312-3w

Orimulsion
Air pollution control 3w

Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 362

Osteoporosis
213w

Overseas aid
135-6w
Angola 239w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 339-40, 605-6w
Education 604-5w
Kenya 26w
Paraguay 136w
Peru 27w
Somalia 239w
Uganda 600w

Overseas students
Bosnia-Herzegovina 598w

Overseas trade
Eastern Europe 340
Oil industry 95w

Overseas workers
173-4w
Domestic service 363w, 562-3w, 596w
Entry clearances 235-6w

Packaging
EC action 1-2w, 93w
Environment protection 330w
Prescription drugs 171w, 216-7w

Paice, Mr James
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 532
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 441
Questions
Middle East, Peace negotiations 278w

Paisley, Rev Ian
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 27, 37

Pakistan
Foreign policy 281-2w

Palace of Westminster
Gun sports 199w
Photography 199w
Rodents 86w

Palestine Liberation Organisation
332

Palestinians
332
Refugees 330

Paraguay
Armed forces training 132w
Overseas aid 136w
Technical assistance 136w

Parents rights
Sex education 391-2w

Parking
Royal Victoria Infirmary & Associated Hospitals NHS Trust 217w

Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund
(04:11:93) 542-53

Parliamentary data & video network
197-8w

Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund
496-8w

Parliamentary questions
(04:11:93) 577-88

Parliamentary sovereignty & European Community
VAT (03:11:93) 370

Parole Board
Contracts of employment 571w

Parry, Mr Robert
Questions
Angola, Overseas aid 239w
Building industry, Death 266-7w
Building industry, Northern Ireland 264w
Commonwealth Institute, Finance 27w
Haiti, Foreign policy 280w
Housing action trusts, Liverpool 100-1w, 202w
Immigration applications, Genetics 593-4w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 332
Pakistan, Foreign policy 281-2w
Peru, Diplomatic relations 593w
Peru, Human rights 593w
Political refugees 568-9w
Road accidents, Taking & driving away 135w
Somalia, Overseas aid 239w
Taking & driving away, Road accidents 150w, 184w
Tobacco duties 21w
Unemployment, Northern Ireland 262-3w

Partnerships for change
136w

Part-time employment
Low pay 162w

Party conferences
Speeches 56w, 480w

Pathology
Contracts for services 455-6w
Lister Hospital 455-6w

Patients
Complaints 460-2w
Costs 167w
Expenditure 213w

Patient's Charter
460w
Mental patients 534w

Patients' rights
Surgery 214-5w

***Patten, Rt Hon John**, Secretary of State for Education*
Questions
Dept for Education, Cash limits 55-6w
Educational standards 145w
Grant maintained schools 137w, 144-5
Grant maintained schools, Essex 145
Languages education, Ethnic minorities 146
Literacy 146
Schools, Flags 55w

Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Questions
Road construction 523w

Pawsey, Mr James
Questions
Grant maintained schools 145
Malta, Ministers' visits abroad 276w
NHS finance 166w

Pay incentives
Child Support Agency 590w

Pay review bodies
Health service staff 543w

PAYE
Debts written off 260w

Peace negotiations
Angola 603w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 88w
Cyprus 279w
Middle East 278w, 329-33
Syrian Arab Republic 278w
Transcaucasus 595w
Western Sahara 280w
Yugoslavia 302w

Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Questions
Dept of Health, Relocation of employees 63w
Grant maintained schools 144

Pendle
Post offices 346-7w

Pendry, Mr Tom
Debates etc.
Football Spectators & Sports Grounds Orders 1993 (04:11:93) 554-9, 565, 568, 576
Questions
Football, Netherlands 177-8w
Football (Offences) Act 1991, Prosecutions 178-80w

Pennine Way
101w

Pennines
Road construction 523w

Pension Law Review Committee
Ministerial statements (03:11:93) 356-67

Pension Schemes Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
2R* & rem stages* (04:11:93) 588
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
2R* & rem stages* (04:11:93) 588
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Pensioners
Personal income 190-1w

Pensions
Clergy 45w
Northern Ireland (04:11:93) 588

Performance appraisal
Judges 16

Performance standards
Child Support Agency 80w, 590w
Hospitals 460w
Training & enterprise councils 578w

Personal income
Income tax 116w
Pensioners 190-1w
Social security recipients 188w
Student loans 148w
VAT 510

Personal injury compensation
Road accidents 573w
Social security benefits reductions 84w

Personal pensions
National Insurance Fund 381-2w
Public sector employment 19w

Peru
Diplomatic relations 593w
Human rights 593w
Overseas aid 27w

Pest control
Badgers 252w
Prairie dogs 312w
Rabbits 509w

Peterlee
Criminal proceedings 495-6w

Pharmacists
Pay 536w

Philippines
Visas 87w

Photography
Palace of Westminster 199w

Physiotherapists
Manpower 75-8w
Scotland 75-8w

Pickles, Mr Eric
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 488
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 534-5

Pickthall, Mr Colin
Debates etc.
Hare Coursing (No 2) Bill, 1R (02:11:93) 153-5
Questions
Invalidity benefits, Social security benefits disqualification 270-1w

***Pickthall, Mr Colin**—continued*
VAT, Energy prices 560w

Pigs
Agricultural subsidies 508w

Pike, Mr Peter L
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 415
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 365
Questions
Chemists shops, Lancashire 536w
Community charge grant 324w
Estate Action 486w
Housing, Supplementary credit approvals 319-20w
Housing associations, Housing construction 7w
Housing improvement, Lancashire 329w
Housing investment programmes 483w
Local government revenue 102w
Pennine Way 101w
Prescription charges 535-6w
Prescriptions 536w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 345w
Sleeping rough, Greater London 322w
Student loans 148w
Student loans, Personal income 148w
Textile industry, EC grants & loans 513w

Pindar project
Construction co[redacted]525w

Pirbright
Armed forces married quarters 294w

Pitsea
Post offices (02:11:93) 317-24

Planning compensation
Wing bypass 229w

Planning permission
Hams Hall power station 89w, 101w
Newport Borough Council 10
Opencast mining 7w
Telecommunications technology 488-9w

Poland
Air transport 342-3w, 594w

Poland Hungary assistance for economic restructuring
26w

Police
Bexley 179w
Disclosure of information 375w
Finance 377w
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority 235w

Police (Amendment) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
1R (03:11:93) 370

Police cautions
364-5w
Codes of practice 496w
Durham Constabulary 364w

Police Federation of England & Wales
(03:11:93) 370

Police pensions
Expenditure 174w

Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry
369-72w

POLIS
House of Commons questions 198w

Political impartiality
73w

Political offences
Wales 380w

Political parties
Northern Ireland 511-2

Political refugees
568-9w

Politics & government
Nigeria 277w
Russia 275w

Pollution control
Land pollution 326-7w

Pope, Mr Greg
Questions
Konver programme 96w

Pornography
Telephone services 481w

Portaferry
Ferries 500w

Porter, Mr David
Questions
EC grants & loans 514w
EC grants & loans, Lowestoft 513-4w
Food labelling, Genetically modified organisms 313-4w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Cash limits 39-40w
Road construction, Lowestoft 341w
Schools, Lowestoft 407w

Portillo, Rt Hon Michael, Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Questions
Accounting 21w
Balance of trade 507-8
Economic situation 470w, 507-8
Housing finance 260w
Public expenditure 463w, 469w, 508-9
Public sector borrowing requirement 561-2w
Public utilities, Procurement 22w
Tax yields, Greater London 261w
VAT, Energy prices 465w

Post Office
(02:11:93) 317-24, 348w
Capital investment 350w
External financing limits 350w
Financial targets 350w
Manpower 350-1w
Privatisation 515-6w

Post Office closures
(02:11:93) 317-24

Post Office Counters
(02:11:93) 317-24, 350-1w, 387w

Post offices
Lancashire 346-7w
Pendle 346-7w
Pitsea (02:11:93) 317-24
Social security payments 387w

Postage stamps
Forgery 348w

Postal rates
353w
OECD countries 515w

Postgraduate students
Student loans 54w

Potassium iodate
Radiation protection 211w

Poultry
Animal welfare 252-3w

Poverty
Blaenau Gwent 5-6
Wales 511w

Powell, Mr Ray
Questions
House of Commons accommodation 86w
House of Commons accommodation, Members' facilities 362w
Palace of Westminster, Rodents 86w

Powys
Special schools 333w

Prairie dogs
Pest control 312w

Pregnancy
Armed forces discharges 478w

Pregnant women
Energy prices 546-7w
Women's prisons 14w

Prentice, Mrs Bridget
Questions
Heart pacemakers 454w, 532-3w
Siemens 454w

Prentice, Mr Gordon
Questions
Chartermark scheme 501-2w
EC grants & loans 514w
Investors in people, Training & enterprise councils 157-8w
Kashmir, Religious buildings 599w
Kashmir, UN resolutions 599-600w
Local government reform 204w
Local government reform, North Yorkshire 4w
National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies 517-8w
Post offices, Pendle 346-7w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 345w
Road construction, Pennines 523w
Schultz, Alexander 518w
Training & enterprise councils 579w
Training & enterprise councils, Accounting 581w
Training & enterprise councils, Training allowances 578w
Welfare milk 215w

Pre-school education
Grant maintained schools 147w

Prescott, Mr John
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 120-1
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 40-1, 69-72, 99
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 161, 165, 167-80, 184, 202, 204, 259-61, 264, 267-72, 281, 287-8
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 424-6
Questions
Low pay 158-64w
Low pay, Part-time employment 162w

Prescription charges
535-6w
Expenditure 536w
Income 59w

Prescription drugs
Packaging 171w, 216-7w

Prescriptions
536w
Amoxycillin 59w
Costs 536w
Family doctors 531w
Oral contraceptives 169w
RU486 541w

Press advertising
VAT 558w

Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Primarolo, Ms Dawn
Questions
Breast cancer, Surgery 540w
Children, Maintenance 588w
Contraceptives, Chemists shops 537-8w
Dept of Health, Relocation of employees 61w
Family doctors, Home visits 169-70w
Family doctors, Pay 542w
Family doctors, Prescriptions 531w
Family planning, Men 541w
Fertility, Medical treatments 541w
Foster care 170w
Generic prescribing 216-7w, 531-2w
Geriatric patients, Iatrogenic illness 453w
GP fundholders 212w, 216w, 536w
GP fundholders, Expenditure 536w
GP fundholders, Hospital consultants 536-7w
Health, Footwear 541w
Health, Heating 540w

Primarolo, Ms Dawn—continued
Health insurance 540w
Health insurance, GP fundholders 540w
Health service staff, South East region 535w
Health services 541w
Hospices, Hospital beds 537w
Hospital beds 166w
Hospital closures 540w
Hospital closures, Greater London 539-40w
Hospital consultants, Cancer 539w
Hospital consultants, Career structure 62w
Hospital consultants, Merit awards 214w, 500w, 511w, 529w, 538w
Hospital consultants, Women 59w
Hospitals, Fees & charges 540-1w
Hospitals, Government grants 168w
Influenza, Vaccination 543-4w
London Implementation Group 171w
Maintenance, Children 589-90w
Maternity pay 192w
Medical education, Cancer 541w
Medical records, Privacy 542w
Medical treatments, Codes of practice 542w
NHS, Racial discrimination 535w
NHS & private practice 170-1w
NHS Ethnic Health Unit 210w
NHS finance 64w
NHS internal market 209-10w
NHS trusts, Managers 168-9w
NHS trusts, Pay 537w
Nurses' training 171w
Oral contraceptives, Prescriptions 169w
Prescription charges, Expenditure 536w
Prescription drugs, Packaging 171w
Prescriptions, Costs 536w
Primary health care 59-60w, 452w
RU486, Prescriptions 541w
Surgery, Death 215-6w, 531w
Teaching hospitals, Family doctors 539w
Tuberculosis, Vaccination 538w
Zemaphyte, Limited list prescribing 539w

Primary health care
59-60w, 452w

Prime Minister
Manpower 481w
Official cars 481-2w
Official hospitality 25w

Prime Minister's Policy Unit
Manpower 420w

Prison accommodation
Scotland 526-7w
Wymott Prison 368-9w

Prison Ombudsman
Public appointments 378-9w

Prison population
179-82w
Fine defaulters 365w
Wymott Prison 369w

Prison riots
Wymott Prison 367w

Prison sentences
Young offenders 575w

Prison visits
575w
Security 575w

Prisoners
British residents abroad 28w
Crime 363w
Crimes of violence 236-7w
Families 13w

Prisoners' home leave
238w

Prisoners' transfers
Scotland 14w

Prisons
Construction 19w
Privatisation 12-3w
Scotland 243w
Ships 150, 183w, 526-7w

Privacy
Medical records 542w
Rape 16

Private investment
Jubilee line 339w

Private patients
NHS trusts 248w

Private property
Immobilisation of vehicles 573w

Private rented housing
103w

Private sector housing
Tax allowances 560w

Privatisation
British Rail 12w, (01:11:93) 38-119, (02:11:93) 156-316, 232w, (03:11:93) 419-51, 512-3
British Telecom 121-2w, 513-4
Devonport dockyard 132w
Fees & charges 467-8w
Post Office 515-6w
Prisons 12-3w
Rosyth dockyard 132w
Vehicle Inspectorate 521w

Probation Committees
(04:11:93) 588

Probation liaison committees
(04:11:93) 588

Probation Service Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
2R* & rem stages* (04:11:93) 588
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Procedure Select Committee
(04:11:93) 577-88

Proceeds of Crime
Mafia 87w

Procurement
Public utilities 22w

Productivity
Social Security Benefits Agency 389w

Professional misconduct
NHS trusts 213w

Professional qualifications
Low flying 284-5w

Project Al Yamamah
295-7w

Property Holdings
91w

Property transfer
Armed forces housing 525w
City technology colleges 148w
NHS trusts 169w

Prorogation
Queen's speech (05:11:93) 626-8

Prosecutions
315w
Crimes of violence 316w
Football (Offences) Act 1991 178-80w
Nazi war crimes 315-6w

Prostitution
Thailand 28w

PSA Building Management
Cash limits 5w

Psychiatric nurses
356w
Northern Ireland 498w

Public access
Forests (03:11:93) 489

Public appointments
Arts Council 23w
Barristers 503w
British Council 592-3w
Doncaster 61w
HM Fire Service Inspectorate 575w
Judiciary 14
National Portrait Gallery 420w

Public appointments—continued
NHS trusts 73w
Northern Ireland Health & Social Services Boards 498-9w
Prison Ombudsman 378-9w
Wales 47w
Welsh Office 47w, 331-2w

Public expenditure
463w, 469w, 508-9
Civil servants 554-6w
Local government staff 554-6w

Public footpaths
Rannoch Moor 447w

Public inquiries
THORP 491w

Public investment
Housing 246-7w, 483w

Public lavatories
487w

Public libraries
308w
Official publications 308w
Opening hours 308w, 448w
Scotland 448w
Wales 333w

Public Library Service Review
308-9w

Public meetings
Health authorities 538-9w
Housing associations 489-90w
Non-departmental public bodies 97w, 104w, 165-6w, 185w, 246w, 351-2w, 450w, 494w
Scottish Higher Education Funding Council 151w
Training & enterprise councils 165w

Public petitions
Forests (03:11:93) 489

Public Record Office
Asbestos 292w

Public sector borrowing requirement
561-2w

Public sector employment
Personal pensions 19w

Public service
Ministerial statements (04:11:93) 528-38

Public service vehicles
Criminal records 521w
Finance 521-2w

Public utilities
Procurement 22w

Publications
Bristow, Desmond 480w
Crozier, Brian 480w
Prices 147w
Resettlement 63w
VAT 266w, 461-2w, 504-5, 513w, 551-2w, 557-8w

Publishing
EC countries 512-3w
Employment level 266w

Punjab
90w

Pupil-teacher ratios
Nursery schools 143

Quarry House
Television programmes 186w

Quarrying
Swindon 328w

Queen's speech
Prorogation (05:11:93) 626-8

Quin, Ms Joyce
Questions
Eastern Europe, Overseas trade 340
EC Committee of the Regions 597w
EC Finance Council 117-8w

Quin, Ms Joyce—continued
EC grants & loans 514w
Philippines, Visas 87w
Poland Hungary assistance for economic restructuring 26w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 94w

Rabbits
Pest control 509w

Race Relations Act 1975
Questions
69-70w

Racial discrimination
Barristers 318w
NHS 535w

Radar
Military aircraft 284w

Radiation hazards
Northern Ireland 499-500w
Sellafield 492w, 548w

Radiation protection
Potassium iodate 211w

Radice, Mr Giles
Questions
European Free Trade Association, EC accession 331-2

Radioactive materials
347w

Radioactive waste disposal
6w, 125w, 324w
AWE Aldermaston 64-5w, 124-5w, 526w
International conferences 324w
Sea pollution 253w
THORP 345-6w

Radiotherapy
Medical equipment 221w

RAF Brize Norton
283w

RAF Chivenor
Low flying 126w

RAF Fairford
Air accidents 290w
Air displays 66-7w

RAF Hendon
Land acquisition 133w

RAF Honington
131w

RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine
Defence contracts 288w

RAF Lakenheath
129-31w
F15 Aircraft 287w

RAF Lossiemouth
Armed forces deployment 287w
Low flying 125w

RAF Mildenhall
129w

RAF Rosehearty
300w

RAF Spadeadam
Low flying 126w

RAF St Mawgan
Low flying 126w, 129w

RAF Tain
300w
Low flying 126w

RAF Wainfleet
126w

RAF West Drayton
65w

Ragwort
Weed control 343w

Rail Regulator
(01:11:93) 38-119, (02:11:93) 156-316

Rail users consultative committees
(01:11:93) 38-119

Railtrack
(01:11:93) 38-119, (02:11:93) 156-316, 232w
Manpower 336w
Railway safety 336-7w

Railway industry
Sweden 337w

Railway Inspectorate
Manpower 438w

Railway network
Channel tunnel 89w, 232w, 338w, 522w
Land acquisition 233w

Railway safety
Isle of Wight 340w
Railtrack 336-7w

Railway stations
Berwickshire 11w
Channel tunnel 338w, 522w
Jubilee line 339-40w
Taxis 12w

Railway track
Coopers & Lybrand 232w

Railway travel
Bicycles 232-3w
Tax allowances 560w

Railways Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Lords amendts (01:11:93) 38-119, (03:11:93) 419-51
Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 156-316
Business questions (01:11:93) 120-5, (03:11:93) 484-8
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625
Questions
516
Guillotine 148-9

Rannoch Moor
Public footpaths 447w

Rape
Privacy 16

Rathbone, Mr Tim
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 122
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 91
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 191-2, 224-8, 243
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 428, 430
Questions
Planning permission, Telecommunications technology 488-9w
South Africa, Democracy 278w

Raynor Ferrar
196w

Raynsford, Mr Nick
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 236
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 277w
Low incomes, Marginal tax rates 77w

RECHAR
96w

Recorders
Manpower 319w

Recreation spaces
Driving offences 17w

Recruitment
Health & Safety Executive 265w

Redgrave, Vanessa
Yugoslavia 595w

Redmond, Mr Martin
Questions
Agricultural Wages Board, Inspections 106w
Agricultural Wages Board, Manpower 106w
Air accidents, Jet aircraft 9-10w

Redmond, Mr Martin—continued
Air force, Armed forces deployment 300w
Aircrew, Licensing 9w
Airships, Defence procurement 286w
Ancient monuments, Architectural conservation 134w, 151-2w
Anglo-Irish talks 134w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 248-52w
Brodsworth Hall, Art works 308w
Civil defence, Finance 175-6w
Dominie aircraft 287w
Doncaster Healthcare NHS Trust, Resignations 211w
Harrier aircraft, Air accidents 288-9w
Ince B power station, Air pollution control 2-3w
Lone parents, Social security recipients 391w
Low flying, Complaints 285w
Low flying, Germany 129w, 131w, 285w
Low flying, Harrier aircraft 129w
Low flying, Italy 131w
Low flying, Norway 129-30w
Low flying, Professional qualifications 285w
Low flying, Tornado aircraft 287w
Low flying, Turkey 131w
Maintenance, Children 194-5w
Military aircraft, Air accidents 287w
Military aircraft, Airmisses 288w
Military exercises, North America 289-90w
Nuclear power, Air pollution control 94-5w
Nurses, Career structure 60-1w
Open Skies Proposals 286-7w
Orimulsion, Air pollution control 3w
Palace of Westminster, Photography 199w
Palace of Westminster, Rodents 86w
Patients, Costs 167w
Prisons, Scotland 243w
Public appointments, Doncaster 61w
Quarry House, Television programmes 186w
RAF Fairford, Air accidents 290w
RAF Fairford, Air displays 66-7w
RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine, Defence contracts 288w
RAF Lakenheath, F15 Aircraft 287w
RAF Lossiemouth, Armed forces deployment 287w
Tornado aircraft, Air accidents 131w, 287w

Redundancy
Connor Peripherals 239-40w

Redundancy pay
Armed forces 293w

***Redwood, Rt Hon John**, Secretary of State for Wales*
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 374-6, 381
Questions
Anthrax, South Wales 511w
Beef premiums, Wales 336w
Cardiff Airport 1-3
Cardiff Bay 510w
Cardiff Bay Development Corporation 511w
Cattle, Wales 510w
Cereals, Wales 9-10
EC grants & loans, Wales 11
Economic policy, Wales 48-9w
Employment opportunities, Wales 46w
Foreign investment in UK, Employment opportunities 51w
Hospital waiting lists, Wales 511w
Industrial investment, Wales 47w
Labour Party, Wales 3
Land drainage, Llandudno 49w
Local government finance, Wales 48w, 335w
Local government reform, Wales 48w
Manufacturing industries, Wales 47w
Poverty, Blaenau Gwent 5-6
Poverty, Wales 511w
Roads, Wales 11
Schools, Flags 51w
Sheep premiums, Wales 331w
Unemployment, Newport 47w
Welsh Office, Cash limits 52-3w
Welsh Office, Civil service manpower 51w
Welsh Office, Expenditure 47w
Welsh Office, Joint public-private sector ventures 111w

Redwood, Rt Hon John—continued
Welsh Office, Ministerial policy advisors 334w
Welsh Office, Public appointments 47w, 331-2w

Re-employment
Civil service retirement 293w

Referenda
Northern Ireland government 419w

Refreshment Dept
362w

Refugees
279w
Palestinians 330
Romania 185w
Social security benefits 592w

Refuse derived fuel
Belvedere 347w

Reg (EEC)1765/92
528w

Regional aid
EC grants & loans 94w, 345-6w
South Yorkshire 346w

Regional health authorities
Finance 533-4w
Manpower 460w, 547w
NHS administration 217w

Regional planning & development
Ministerial statements (04:11:93) 517-27

Regional selective assistance
Amkor Anam Europe 241w
Scotland 240-1w

Religious buildings
Kashmir 599w

Religious education
Curriculum 54w

Relocation of employees
Dept of Health 61w, 63w

Rent assessment committees
484w

Rents
206w
Housing associations 483-4w

Repairs & maintenance
AWE Aldermaston 64w, 526w
District health authorities 64w
School buildings 145-6w, 410w
10 Downing Street 91-2w

Repetitive strain injury
453w
Medical research 453w

Republic of Ireland
Ministerial statements (01:11:93) 19-37

Resettlement
Publications 63w

Resignations
Doncaster Healthcare NHS Trust 211w

Respite care
Northern Ireland 497w

Restart programme
Contracts for services 420-33w

Retail trade
509

Retex
513w

"Review of the Implementation & Enforcement of EC law in the UK"
344w

Rhinoceros products
Hong Kong 597-8w

Richards, Mr Rod
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 488
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 392

Richards, Mr Rod—continued
Questions
Grant maintained schools, Wales 48w
House renovation grants, Wales 248w
Labour Party, Wales 3
Welsh Office, Cash limits 52-3w
Youth training, Expenditure 438-9w

Richborough power station
3w
Air pollution control 2-3w

Riddick, Mr Graham
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 487
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 476
Points of order (04:11:93) 541
Railways Bill, Points of order (04:11:93) 539
Questions
Electrical safety, Safety standards 353w
GATT, European communities 275-6w
Grant maintained schools 137w
Habitual offenders 570-1w
Public expenditure 508

***Rifkind, Rt Hon Malcolm**, Secretary of State for Defence*
Questions
Ministry of Defence, Cash limits 68w

River Dee
11

River pollution
Coal mine closures 7w

Road accidents
Children 50w
Northern Ireland 135w
Personal injury compensation 573w
Scotland 150w
Summertime 439-40w
Taking & driving away 135w, 150w, 184w
Wales 50w

Road construction
523w
A1 225-6w
A1-M1 link 338w
A12 225-6w
Compensation 225w
Departmental correspondence 342w
Hereford 522-3w
Land acquisition 233w
Lowestoft 341w
M62 8-9w
Newcastle upon Tyne 225w
Northern Ireland 134w
Pennines 523w
Sites of special scientific interest 339w
Worthing Borough Council 342w

Road haulage licences
Criminal records 337w

Road safety
Schools 50-1w
Wales 50-1w

Road traffic
A8 262w
M25 10w
M62 8-9w, 343w

Road works
A5 49w
A38 12w
A369 231w
Greater London 10w
M5 231w

Roads
Wales 11

***Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn**, Minister of State for Wales*
Questions
A5, Road works 49w
Beef, Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 6
Bridges, Estuaries 334w
Building industry, Wales 8
Coal mining, Wales 46w

Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn—continued
Employment opportunities, Wales 7-9
Foreign investment in UK, Wales 8
Further Education Funding Council for Wales, Expenditure 112-3w
Grant maintained schools, Wales 48w
Grant Maintained Schools Centre 510w
Income, Dyfed 11-2
M4 332w
National parks, Wales 47w
Public libraries, Wales 333w
Road accidents, Children 50w
Road safety, Schools 50-1w
St David's Hospital Cardiff, Fires 52w
School meals, Wales 49w
Special education, Wales 110-2w, 336w
Special schools, Powys 333w
Teacher training, Wales 336w
Technology schools initiative, Wales 333w
Training & enterprise councils, Wales 511w
Unemployment, Wales 9
Voluntary organisations, Government grants 46w

Robertson, Mr George
Questions
Housing benefits, Scotland 382-6w

Robertson, Mr Raymond S
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 487
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 277

Robinson, Mr Geoffrey
Questions
Overseas aid, Education 604-5w

Robinson, Mr Mark
Debates etc.
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 441

Robinson, Mr Peter
Questions
Fire regulations, Government buildings 134w
National lottery, Sports 24-5w
Office of the National Lottery 25w

Roche, Mrs Barbara
Questions
Cenotaph, Festivals & special occasions 202w
English education, Curriculum 147w
MI5 the Security Service 571w
Refugees, Romania 185w
Statewatch 186w

Rodents
Palace of Westminster 86w

Roe, Mrs Marion
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 347

Rogers, Mr Allan
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 390, 393, 395-6, 399
Questions
Cardiff Airport 2-3
Indonesia, Human rights 328-9

Romania
Refugees 185w

Rooker, Mr Jeff
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 460
Questions
Bridges, Bromford 340w

Rooney, Mr Terry
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 364

Ross, Mr Ernie
Debates etc.
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (03:11:93) 441
Questions
Middle East, Peace negotiations 278w, 329-30

Ross, Mr William
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 28

Rosyth dockyard
Privatisation 132w

Rowe, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 463-4
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 526-7
Questions
Channel tunnel, High speed trains 338w
Channel tunnel, Railway network 232w
Grant maintained schools, Kent 142
Road construction, Land acquisition 233w

Rowlands, Mr Ted
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 384-7
Questions
Employment opportunities, Wales 8-9, 46w
European Monetary Institute 555w
European Monetary Institute, Manpower 555w

Royal Liverpool University Hospital NHS Trust
534-5w

Royal Ulster Constabulary
496w

Royal Victoria Infirmary
217w

Royal Victoria Infirmary & Associated Hospitals NHS Trust
Ophthalmic services 217w
Parking 217w

RU486
Prescriptions 541w

Ruddock, Ms Joan
Questions
Doncaster Prison, Contracts for services 375w
Employment opportunities, Lewisham 434w
Marriage of convenience, Lewisham 455w
Metropolitan Police, Manpower 184-5w
Prison Ombudsman, Public appointments 378-9w
Self-employed, Lewisham 391w
Social security abuse, Lewisham 585-6w
Vacancies, Lewisham 434-6w
VAT registration, Lewisham 465-6w
Wymott Prison, Prison accommodation 368-9w
Wymott Prison, Prison population 369w
Wymott Prison, Sexual offences 367-8w

Russia
Democracy 275w
Elections 30w
Politics & government 275w
Seals 598w

SA80 rifle
472w

***Sackville, Mr Tom**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Health*
Questions
AIDS, Hospital patients 220w
Ambulance services, Manpower 221-2w
Amoxycillin, Prescriptions 59w
Baby care units 455w
Cancer, International conferences 171w
Cancer hazards, Chrysoidine 214w
Childbirth 166w
Dept of Health, Civil service manpower 64w
Dept of Health, Joint public-private sector ventures 172w
Dept of Health, Relocation of employees 61w, 63w
Diabetes, Health service staff 215w
District health authorities, Repairs & maintenance 64w
Drugs, Death 545-6w
Drugs, Licensing 452w

Sackville, Mr Tom—continued
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust, Finance 173w
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust, Manpower 172w
Ethnic minorities, Tower Hamlets 532w
Family planning, Men 541w
Fertility, Medical treatments 541w
Health, Footwear 541w
Health hazards, VAT 213w
Health insurance 540w
Health physics 538w
Health service staff, South East region 535w
Health services 541w
Heart pacemakers 454w, 532-3w
Hospices, Hospital beds 537w
Hospital admissions 214w
Hospital beds 166w
Hospital closures 539-40w
Hospital consultants, Per capita costs 530-1w
Hospital consultants, Women 59w
Hospital patients, Greater London 60w
Hospitals, Birmingham 60w
Hospitals, Fees & charges 540-1w
Hospitals, Government grants 168w
Hypothermia, Death 212-3w, 456w
Influenza, Vaccination 459w, 543-4w
Intensive care, Greater Manchester 458w
Lost working days, Sick leave 455w
Marriage of convenience, Lewisham 455w
Medical records, Privacy 542w
Medical treatments, Codes of practice 542w
Newcastle General Hospital, AIDS 220w
NHS, Energy prices 168w, 452w
NHS, Offices 167w
NHS Estate Management & Health Building Agency 171-2w
NHS Ethnic Health Unit 210w
NHS finance 64w, 166w
NHS internal market 209-10w
NHS Management Executive, Manpower 63w
NHS trusts, Property transfer 169w
Nurses, Career structure 60-1w
Nurses, Manpower 547w
Nurses' training 171w
Office of Population Censuses & Surveys, Cash limits 61-2w
Oral contraceptives, Prescriptions 169w
Osteoporosis 213w
Pathology, Contracts for services 455-6w
Patients, Costs 167w
Patients, Expenditure 213w
Potassium iodate, Radiation protection 211w
Pregnant women, Energy prices 546-7w
Radiotherapy, Medical equipment 221w
Repetitive strain injury 453w
Repetitive strain injury, Medical research 453w
Royal Liverpool University Hospital NHS Trust 534-5w
Royal Victoria Infirmary & Associated Hospitals NHS Trust, Parking 217w
RU486, Prescriptions 541w
Salmonella, Eggs 457-8w, 545w
Salmonella, Research 457w
Siemens 454w
Smoking, Health education 210-1w
Smoking, Lost working days 452w
Smoking related diseases, Expenditure 452w
Surgery, Death 169w, 215-6w, 531w
Surgery, Patients' rights 214-5w
Tobacco advertising 454w
Tuberculosis, Vaccination 538w
Viral haemorrhagic disease, Notifiable diseases 219w
Welfare milk 215w

Safety certificates
Sportsgrounds (04:11:93) 554-76

Safety of Sports Grounds (Designation) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(04:11:93) 554-76

Safety standards
Electrical safety 353w

Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim, Minister for Industry
Questions
Aerospace industry, Government assistance to industry 234-6w
EC Cohesion Fund 515w

Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim—continued
EC grants & loans 514w
EC grants & loans, Lowestoft 513-4w
EC grants & loans, Merseyside 234w
Iron & steel industry, EC action 520w
Konver programme 96w, 349w, 514w
Publishing, EC countries 512-3w
RECHAR 96w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 94w, 345-6w
Shipbuilding, EC grants & loans 349-50w
Shipbuilding Intervention Fund 96-7w
Trade competitiveness, Literacy 94w

St David's Hospital Cardiff
Fires 52w

St Helena
Balance of trade 514w
Work permits 599w

Salmond, Mr Alex
Debates etc.
Business questions (03:11:93) 486-7
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 421
Questions
Prisons, Ships 183w, 526-7w

Salmonella
Eggs 457-8w, 545w
Research 457w

Sanctions
Armenia 303-4w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 302w
Montenegro 303w
UNITA 333-4

Sarajevo
Armed conflict 301w
EC aid 337
Electricity distribution 301w
International assistance 303w

Satellite broadcasting
Sexual deviancy 24w

Schedule D income tax
258w

Scheduled offences
357-60w

Schengen Agreement
182w

School buildings
Asbestos 494w
Repairs & maintenance 145-6w, 410w

School closures
Hospital education 493w
Special schools 493w

School leaving
Employment opportunities 139-40

School libraries
408w

School meals
54-5w
Expenditure 149w
Wales 49w

School milk
Expenditure 149w

School population
Nursery schools 145w

Schools
Capital investment 135-6
Flags 51w, 55w
Inspections 148w, 397-8w, 492w
Lowestoft 407w
Manchester 135-6
Road safety 50-1w
VAT 136w
Vocational education 140

Schultz, Alexander
518w

Science & technology
EC action 502w

Scotland
Agriculture 449w
Ambulance services 451w
Ancient monuments 151-2w
Arable area payments scheme 528-9w
Beef premiums 440w
Bridges 448w
Criminal injuries compensation 450-1w
Criminal statistics 154w
Crofting (04:11:93) 587-8
Cultural relations 593w
Devolution 73-4w
Eye tests 74w
Farm incomes 74-6w
Fishing gear 447-8w
Homicide 527w
Hospital consultants 529w
Hospital waiting lists 530w
Housing 246-7w
Housing benefits 382-6w
Incinerators 449-50w, 527-8w
Land ownership & tenure 529w
Local government reform 154w, 527w
Mental patients 247-8w
New towns development corporations 151w
NHS complaints (04:11:93) 588
NHS trusts 73w, 244w, 248w
Non-departmental public bodies 447w
Non-domestic rates 241-2w
Nursery schools 447w
Physiotherapists 75-8w
Prison accommodation 526-7w
Prisoners' transfers 14w
Prisons 243w
Public libraries 448w
Regional selective assistance 240-1w
Road accidents 150w
Sheep premiums 152-3w, 447w
Smoke alarms 154w
Suicide 528w
Summertime 439-40w
Timber frame housing 530w
Travelling people 450w
Victim support schemes 243-4w, 451w

"Scotland in the Union - Partnership for Good White Paper"
73-4w

Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas, Minister for Social Security and Disabled People
Questions
Crisis loans, Administrative delays 388-9w
Crisis loans, Social security recipients 388w
Dept of Social Security, Cash limits 81w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Chronically sick 77w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Social security claims 77-8w
Industrial injuries scheme, Coal mining 591-2w
Invalidity benefits, Social security benefits disqualification 270-1w
Means tested benefits, Social security recipients 590-2w
Severe disablement allowance, Women 83-4w
Sickness benefits, Social security recipients 186-7w
Social Fund, Administrative costs 83w
Social security, Administrative costs 82-3w
Social security, Advisory bodies 592w
Social security, Expenditure 193w
Social security benefits, Refugees 592w
Social security benefits reductions, EC countries 82w
Social security benefits reductions, Personal injury compensation 84w

Scottish Association of Victim Support Schemes
243-4w

Scottish Development Agency
Environment protection 530w

Scottish Enterprise
246w
Expenditure 245w

Scottish health boards
Contracts for services 440-6w, 529w

Scottish Higher Education Funding Council
Expenditure 247w
Public meetings 151w

Scottish Homes
246w
Expenditure 247w
Housing benefits 382-6w

Scottish Land Court
(04:11:93) 588

Scottish Land Court Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
2R* & rem stages* (04:11:93) 588
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Scottish Office
Cash limits 71-3w
Civil service manpower 71w
Joint public-private sector ventures 244-6w
Non-departmental public bodies 151w, 246w, 450w

Sea pollution
Radioactive waste disposal 253w
Waste disposal 41-2w, 313w

Seals
Fishing gear 447-8w
Russia 598w

Season tickets
560w

Secure accommodation
Criminal justice liaison committees 17-8w
Greater London 168w
Wales 51-2w
Young people 168w

Secure training centres
575w
Contracts for services 18-9w
Wales 18-9w

Security
Chequers 92w
Northern Ireland 357-60w
Prison visits 575w

Security guards
Housing estates 183w

Security industry
Licensing 183-4w

Sedgemore, Mr Brian
Questions
Channel tunnel, Railway network 89w

Self-employed
Lewisham 391w

Sellafield
433-4w, 499-500w
Leukaemia 68-70w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing 346w
Nuclear non proliferation 281w
Radiation hazards 492w, 548w

Sentencing
Squatting 516

Serbia
Medical equipment 602w

Serials
VAT 556-7w

Severe disablement allowance
Women 83-4w

Sewage
Firth of Clyde 73w
Waste disposal 73w

Sex discrimination
Compensation 69-70w

Sex Discrimination Act 1975
Questions
69-70w

Sex education
495w
Parents rights 391-2w

Sexual deviancy
Satellite broadcasting 24w

Sexual offences
Children 563-8w
Wymott Prison 367-8w

Share option scheme
Tax allowances 119w

Shaw, Mr David
Debates etc.
Members' pensions (04:11:93) 546
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 361
Questions
Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund 496-8w
Personal pensions, Public sector employment 19w
Public expenditure, Civil servants 554-6w
Tax yields 464w

Shaw, Sir Giles
Debates etc.
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (04:11:93) 539

Shaw Committee
see NHS Corporate Management Task Force

Sheehy Committee
see Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry

Sheep dipping
Health hazards 33w
Organophosphorous pesticides 312-3w

Sheep premiums
311-2w
Northern Ireland 44w
Scotland 152-3w, 447w
Wales 331w

Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Questions
VAT, Energy prices 506-7

Sheltered housing
325w

Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Questions
Brucellosis, Import of live animals 40w
Butter, Intervention stocks 504-5w
Farm incomes, Marginal land 107-10w
Food from Britain 41w
Hill livestock allowances, Marginal land 506w
Horses 505w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Cash limits 39-40w

Shepherd, Mr Colin
Questions
House of Commons catering, Members' facilities 362w

Shersby, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Statute Law Repeals Bill (HL), 2R (04:11:93) 593
Waste disposal, Letchworth (04:11:93) 619
Questions
Church Commissioners, Sunday trading 13
Grant maintained schools 137w

Shipbuilding
502-3
EC grants & loans 349-50w
Manpower 435w

Shipbuilding Intervention Fund
96-7w

Shipping
Government assistance 520w
Taxation 502

Shipping accidents
Submarines 474-5w

Shipping registration
Fishing vessels 310w

Ships
Prisons 150, 183w, 526-7w

Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 526

Short money
(04:11:93) 595-617

Sick leave
Lost working days 455w
Vehicle Inspectorate 337-8w

Sickness benefits
Social security recipients 186-7w

Siemens
454w, 533w

Single sex schools
148w

Sites of special scientific interest
Road construction 339w

Sittings of the House Select Committee
361w

Skin disorders
Zemaphyte 539w

Skinner, Mr Dennis
Debates etc.
British Rail, Points of order (03:11:93) 368
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 413
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 531, 533-4
European Council (01:11:93) 30, 34-5
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 604, 608-10
Oral question time intervention (01:11:93) 16
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 159-60, 167
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 277w
Judges, Accountability 16
Public expenditure 508-9

Sleeping rough
Greater London 322-3w

Slovakia
Diplomatic service 599w

Small businesses
Defence research 297w
Profits 464w

Smith, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 166
Questions
Corporation tax, Capital allowances 260-1w
VAT, Accounting 462-3w
VAT, Fruit juices 509-10

Smith, Mr Chris
Questions
Channel tunnel, Railway network 338w, 522w
Environmentally sensitive areas 33w
GATT 559w
Sellafield, Leukaemia 68-70w
UN Convention on Biological Diversity 202w

Smith, Rt Hon John
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 21-3
Questions
Maintenance, Children 147-8
Political parties, Northern Ireland 511-2

Smith, Mr Llew
Questions
Ammunition, Uranium 476w
Anthrax, South Wales 511w
Armed forces, Vaccination 475w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry 526w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry, Disclosure of information 301w
Association of South East Asian Nations, Export controls 596-7w

Smith, Mr Llew—continued
Atomic Weapons Establishment, Safety 474w
AWE Aldermaston, Buildings 64w
AWE Aldermaston, Radioactive waste disposal 64-5w, 124-5w, 526w
AWE Aldermaston, Repairs & maintenance 526w
Beaches, Water pollution 327w
Cancer, International conferences 171w, 322w
Chemical weapons, Vaccination 476w
Codex Alimentarius Commission 509w
Defence, France 524w
"Development Below the Low Water" 491w
Dounreay, Nuclear reactors 529w
EURATOM, Nuclear reactors 93-4w
European Council 479w
European Parliament committees 596w
Forests, Air pollution 331w
GATT 514w, 596w
Iraq-Kuwait conflict, Armed forces casualties 526w
Iraq-Kuwait conflict, Vaccination 475-6w
Land pollution, Pollution control 326-7w
Malaysia, Aid financed trade 239w
Ministerial speeches 524w
Ministry of Defence, Consultants 294w
Multilateral Trade Organisation 595-6w
Nuclear non proliferation, EC countries 569w
Nuclear power, Exports 347w
Nuclear safeguards, Inspections 518w
Nuclear safeguards, North Korea 347w
Packaging, EC action 93w
Partnerships for change 136w
Party conferences, Speeches 480w
Potassium iodate, Radiation protection 211w
Poverty, Blaenau Gwent 5
Poverty, Wales 511w
Radiation hazards, Northern Ireland 499-500w
Radioactive waste disposal 125w
Radioactive waste disposal, International conferences 324w
Science & technology, EC action 502w
Scottish Development Agency, Environment protection 530w
Sea pollution, Radioactive waste disposal 253w
Sellafield, Nuclear fuel reprocessing 346w
Sellafield, Nuclear non proliferation 281w
Submarines, Shipping accidents 474-5w
Sustainable development 492w
THORP, Employment opportunities 266w
THORP, Industrial health & safety 433-4w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 345-6w
Transport of radioactive materials 8w, 342w
UNICEF, Child abuse 531w
USA, Nuclear weapons tests 597w

Smoke alarms
Scotland 154w

Smoking
Health education 210-1w
Lost working days 452w
Medical treatments 243w, 452w

Smoking related diseases
Expenditure 452w

Smyth, Rev Martin
Questions
Maternity services, Northern Ireland 42w

Snape, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 122
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 41, 60-3, 92
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 163, 191-2, 195

Soames, Mr Nicholas, Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture
Questions
Badgers, Bovine tuberculosis 314w
Badgers, Pest control 252w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 33-6w, 248-52w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Isle of Man 35-6w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Mink 34w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Offal 34w

Soames, Mr Nicholas—continued
Bovine tuberculosis, South West region 506-7w
Cattle, Transport of animals 508w
Cattle diseases 311w
Codex Alimentarius Commission 509w
Export of live animals 508w
Food labelling, Genetically modified organisms 313-4w
Poultry, Animal welfare 252-3w
Prairie dogs, Pest control 312w
Rabbits, Pest control 509w
Sheep dipping, Health hazards 33w
Sheep dipping, Organophosphorous pesticides 312-3w
Transport of animals, Animal welfare 508w
Warble fly 505w

Social Fund
Administrative costs 83w
Ynys Mon 271-4w

Social security
Administrative costs 82-3w
Advisory bodies 592w
Expenditure 193w

Social security abuse
512
Lewisham 585-6w

Social security & taxation
Marginal tax rates 188-90w

Social security benefits
Child Support Agency 390w
Children 186w
Earnings rules 269-70w
Investment income 82w
Medical examinations 460w
Publicity 187-8w
Refugees 592w
Take-up 81-2w

Social Security Benefits Agency
Clothing 585w
Productivity 389w

Social security benefits disqualification
Invalidity benefits 270-1w

Social security benefits reductions
77w
Council tax benefits 187w
EC countries 82w
Income support 78w, 192w
Personal injury compensation 84w

Social Security benefits rules
Clothing 265-6w
Unemployment benefits 265-6w

Social security benefits uprating
385-7w
Index linking 387-8w

Social security claims
Independent Living 1993 Fund 77-8w
Lewisham 391w

Social security payments
Post offices 387w

Social security recipients
Crisis loans 388w
Housing benefits 391w
Income support 192-3w
Invalidity benefits 186-7w
Lone parents 391w
Means tested benefits 590-2w
Personal income 188w
Sickness benefits 186-7w

Social security reciprocal agreements
Australia 81w

Soley, Mr Clive
Questions
Trials, Mass media 15-6
Turkey, Kurds 598-9w

Somalia
Immigration applications 571-2w
Overseas aid 239w

South Africa
Commonwealth 326
Democracy 278-9w, 326

South Africa—continued
EC external trade 97w
Elections 326-7
UK companies abroad 97w

South Ayrshire NHS Trust
528w

South East region
Health service staff 535w

South Glamorgan
Mental health services 334-5w

South Wales
Anthrax 511w

South West region
Bovine tuberculosis 506-7w

South Yorkshire
European Social Fund 158w
Regional aid 346w

Southend Health Care NHS Trust
Hospital patients 60w

Sovereignty
Belize 87w

Speaker and deputies
Debates etc.
Addressing the Chair (01:11:93) 65, (02:11:93) 284
Amendments & new clauses (01:11:93) 38, 78, 107, 113, 117, (02:11:93) 211-2, 253-6, 262, (03:11:93) 455
Business questions (01:11:93) 120-1
Calling of Members (03:11:93) 350
Calls to order (03:11:93) 419-22, 489
Calls to order (01:11:93) 36-79, 121, 125, (04:11:93) 512
House of Commons Chamber, Points of order (04:11:93) 541
House of Commons divisions (03:11:93) 431, 439, 445
House of Commons standing orders motions (04:11:93) 577
Leave to speak (01:11:93) 74
Members' interventions (01:11:93) 42, (03:11:93) 376, 381
Ministerial statements (01:11:93) 24, (03:11:93) 345, 352
Oral questions (04:11:93) 499-500
Orders & regulations motions (04:11:93) 554
Points of order (01:11:93) 36-7, 38-9, 74, 78, 119-20, (02:11:93) 134, 155, 160, 162, 163, 210, 253, 277, (03:11:93) 342, 368-70, 390, 401, 403-5, 408, 411-5, 419, 421-2, 441, 447, 452, 456, 460, (04:11:93) 539-41, 606
Private bills (02:11:93) 134
Private bills, Points of order (02:11:93) 134
Queen's speech, Prorogation (05:11:93) 626-8
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625
Scope of debate (01:11:93) 48, 62, 89, (02:11:93) 167, 197, 232, (03:11:93) 379, 384, 386, 455, (04:11:93) 584-5, 604, 605, 608

Spearing, Mr Nigel
Debates etc.
Business questions (01:11:93) 123
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 283
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 419-20
Questions
Channel tunnel, Railway stations 338w, 522w
European economic area 93w
European Free Trade Association Surveillance Authority 99-100w
Health services, East London 547w
M25, Road traffic 10w
Official report 502-3w

Special education
141-2
Leicester 140-1
Wales 110-2w, 336w

Special schools
Inspections 493w
Powys 333w
School closures 493w

Speech therapy
Expenditure 543w

Speeches
Party conferences 56w, 480w

Speed limits
A1 449w
Greater London 523w

Spellar, Mr John
Questions
Council house sales, Mortgages 101w
Hams Hall power station, Planning permission 89w, 101w
Immobilisation of vehicles, Private property 573w
India, Human rights 90w
Mafia, Proceeds of Crime 87w
Middle East, Peace negotiations 278w
Overseas workers, Domestic service 363w

Spicer, Sir Jim
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 473-4

Spicer, Mr Michael
Questions
Civil service agencies, Manpower 502w
Civil service manpower 561w
Trans-European Networks, Harwich 10w

Spink, Dr Robert
Questions
Bilateral aid 604w
Council tax, Valuation tribunals 323w
Cyprus 419w
Hospital consultants, Per capita costs 530-1w
Hospital patients, Greater London 60w
Telephone services, Government departments 481w, 560w
UNESCO 479w, 595w

Sports
National lottery 24-5w
Non-domestic rates 241-2w

Sportsgrounds
Safety certificates (04:11:93) 554-76

***Sproat, Mr Iain**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of National Heritage*
Debates etc.
Football Spectators & Sports Grounds Orders 1993 (04:11:93) 559-64, 573-6
Questions
Cenotaph, Festivals & special occasions 202w
Dept of National Heritage, Joint public-private sector ventures 201-2w
Dept of National Heritage, Non-departmental public bodies 97w
Listed buildings, Hospitals 98-9w
National lottery 200w
National lottery, Sports 24-5w
Office of the National Lottery 25w
Public libraries 308w
Public libraries, Official publications 308w
Public libraries, Opening hours 308w
Public Library Service Review 308-9w

Squatting
Sentencing 516

Squire, Ms Rachel
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 474
Questions
Scottish health boards, Contracts for services 440-6w, 529w

***Squire, Mr Robin**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept for Education*
Questions
City technology colleges 494w
City technology colleges, Property transfer 148w
Education, Ethnic minorities 145w
Education, Standard spending assessments 146w
Educational finance 146w

***Squire, Mr Robin**—continued*
Educational standards 143-4
Educational standards, Disclosure of information 146w
English education, Curriculum 147w
GCE A level 146w
Grant maintained schools 137-8w, 142-3
Grant maintained schools, Audit 283w
Grant maintained schools, Conferences 282-3w
Grant maintained schools, Finance 138-44w, 282w
Grant maintained schools, Government grants 492-3w
Grant maintained schools, Kent 142-3
Grant maintained schools, Nottinghamshire 409w
Grant Maintained Schools Centre 492w
History education, Northern Ireland 148w
Local education authorities 398w
Local education authorities, Local government reform 149w
Nursery schools 144
Nursery schools, Pupil-teacher ratios 143
Nursery schools, School population 145w
Pre-school education, Grant maintained schools 147w
Publications, Prices 147w
Religious education, Curriculum 54w
Schools, Inspections 148w, 397-8w, 492w
Schools, Lowestoft 407w
Schools, VAT 136w
Single sex schools 148w
Teachers, Child safety 409w
Teachers, Vacancies 494-5w
Technology colleges, Departmental publications 396-7w

Standard spending assessments
101-3w, 203-4w, 324w
Council tax capping 102w
Education 146-7w

Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 255

Statewatch
186w

Statistics
Land ownership & tenure 197w

Statute Law (Repeals) Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
2R & rem stages* (04:11:93) 591-4
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Questions
Nursery schools, Scotland 447w
Smoke alarms, Scotland 154w

Steen, Mr Anthony
Debates etc.
Access to Parliament, Points of order (02:11:93) 210, 252-3
Questions
Church property, Land use 45w
Deregulation initiative 344w
Deregulation initiative, Departmental publications 345w
Implementing legislation, EC law 344w

Steinberg, Mr Gerry
Questions
Cattle, Transport of animals 508w
Export of live animals 508w
Gambling 362-3w
National lottery 200w
Transport of animals, Animal welfare 508w

Stephen, Mr Michael
Questions
Office of Telecommunications, Cash limits 349w

Step-parents
(03:11:93) 343-55

Stevenson, Mr George
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 163, 184, 258, 283-5

***Stevenson, Mr George**—continued*
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 432
Questions
Prisons, Ships 150

***Stewart, Mr Allan**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office*
Debates etc.
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Cervical smears (01:11:93) 127, 130-2
Questions
Ambulance services, Scotland 451w
Ayrshire & Arran Health Board, Urology 528w
Connor Peripherals, Government assistance to industry 239w
Connor Peripherals, Redundancy 239-40w
Employment opportunities, Ayrshire 240w
Eye tests, Scotland 74w
Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Expenditure 245w
Hospital consultants, Merit awards 529w
Hospital waiting lists, Scotland 530w
Hospitals, Incinerators 449-50w
Local enterprise companies 530w
Local government reform, Berwickshire 153w
Local government reform, Costs 527w
Local government reform, East Lothian 74w
Local government reform, Scotland 154w
Mental patients, Scotland 247-8w
Mining, East Lothian 243w
New towns development corporations, Scotland 151w
NHS trusts, Private patients 248w
NHS trusts, Public appointments 73w
NHS trusts, Scotland 244w
Physiotherapists, Manpower 75-8w
Regional selective assistance, Amkor Anam Europe 241w
Regional selective assistance, Scotland 240-1w
Scottish Development Agency, Environment protection 530w
Scottish health boards, Contracts for services 440-6w, 529w
Scottish Office, Non-departmental public bodies 246w
Smoking, Medical treatments 243w
Suicide, Mental patients 528w
Travel-to-work areas, Haddington 242-3w
Victim support schemes, Government grants 451w
Victim support schemes, Scotland 243-4w

Stonebridge estate
207-8w

Strang, Dr Gavin
Questions
Brucellosis, Import of live animals 40w
Farm incomes, Marginal land 43-4w, 74-6w, 107-10w
Food from Britain 41w
Hill livestock allowances, Marginal land 506w
Hill livestock allowances, Northern Ireland 42-4w
Horses 505w
Sheep premiums, Northern Ireland 44w

Straw, Mr Jack
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 519-20
Questions
Council house sales, Local government revenue 205w
High rise flats 206w
House renovation grants 330w
Housing, Public investment 483w
Housing benefits, Social security recipients 591w
Housing improvement 330w
Income support, Mortgages 272w
Public expenditure 469w
Rents 206w
School buildings, Repairs & maintenance 410w

Streeter, Mr Gary
Questions
South Africa, Democracy 279w

Student accommodation
Leicester 137-8
Newcastle upon Tyne 206w

Student grants
137-8, 391w

Student loans
148w, 395-6w
Administrative delays 494w
Personal income 148w
Postgraduate students 54w

Submarines
Shipping accidents 474-5w

Subsidiarity
304w

Suckler cow premiums
Northern Ireland 44w

Suffolk County Council
407w

Suicide
182-3w, 236w
Government grants to voluntary organisations 215w
Mental patients 334w, 453w, 459w, 501w, 528w
Northern Ireland 501w
Scotland 528w
Wales 334w

Sumberg, Mr David
Questions
M62, Motorways 8w
M62, Road construction 8-9w
M62, Road traffic 8-9w, 343w

Summertime
16-8w, 363w, 574w
Road accidents 439-40w
Scotland 439-40w

Sunday trading
Church Commissioners 13

Supplementary credit approvals
Housing 319-20w

Surgery
Breast cancer 540w
Death 169w, 215-6w, 531w
Patients' rights 214-5w

Sustainable Agriculture Food & Environment Alliance
595-6w

Sustainable development
492w

Sweden
Jews 88w
Railway industry 337w

Sweeney, Mr Walter
Debates etc.
Cardiff Bay Barrage Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (03:11:93) 387-8
Questions
Cardiff Airport 2
Local government reform, Wales 48w

Swindon
Quarrying 328w

Sykes, Mr John
Questions
Squatting, Sentencing 516

Syrian Arab Republic
Peace negotiations 278w

Taiwan
Foreign policy 277w

Taking & driving away
Merseyside 184w
Road accidents 135w, 150w, 184w

Tapsell, Sir Peter
Questions
Fiscal policy 150
Interest rates 510
Official engagements 419w

Tax allowances
115-6w
Child care 120-1w
Corporation tax 261w
Enterprise zones 257-8w
Income tax 115w, 548-50w
Private sector housing 560w
Railway travel 560w
Share option scheme 119w
VAT 256w

Tax avoidance
501, 556w

Tax burden
Direct taxation 20w
Indirect taxation 20w

Tax collection
Civil proceedings 257w

Tax credit system
82w

Tax credits
470-1w

Tax evasion
Alcoholic drinks duties 465w, 554w

Tax free income
Income tax 257w

Tax havens
Fraud 559w

Tax thresholds
Families 116w

Tax yields
463-4w
Alcoholic drinks duties 551-2w
Greater London 261w
Income tax 255w
Tobacco duties 256-7w
VAT 256w, 510

Taxation
122-4w
Administrative costs 561w
Child benefit 254w
Debts written off 115-6w
Invalidity benefits 121w, 257w
Life insurance 463w
Shipping 502

Taxis
Birmingham 523w
Railway stations 12w

Taxpayers
Income tax 20w

Taylor, Mrs Ann
Questions
Dept for Education, Advertising 397w
Educational publications, Cost per pupil 405-8w
Educational publications, Expenditure 398-406w
Grant maintained schools 145
Grant maintained schools, Audit 283w
Grant maintained schools, Conferences 282-3w
Grant maintained schools, Finance 282w
Grant maintained schools, Government grants 492-3w
Local education authorities 398w
Nursery schools 144
Schools, Inspections 397-8w, 492w
Student loans 395-6w
Technology colleges, Departmental publications 396-7w

Taylor, Mr Ian
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 35-6
Questions
Curriculum, EC internal trade 136
South Africa, Elections 327

Taylor, Rt Hon John David
Questions
Ferries, Portaferry 500w
Northern Ireland Health & Social Services Boards, Public appointments 498-9w

Taylor, Mr John M, Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Dept
Questions
Barristers, Public appointments 503w
Barristers, Racial discrimination 318w
Birmingham six 319w
Class actions 317w
Courts 18
Crown courts 17
Crown courts, Administration of justice 317-8w
Crown courts, Crime victims 317w
Judges 15, 17
Judges, Accountability 16
Judges, Freemasonry 17-8
Judges, Manpower 45-6w
Juries 16
Land ownership & tenure 504w
Land ownership & tenure, Foreign companies in UK 503-4w
Land ownership & tenure, Statistics 197w
Land registration 197w
Legal aid scheme 319w
Legal aid scheme, Expenditure 318-9w
Magistrates 15
Magistrates, Age 14-5
Magistrates' courts, Administration of justice 318w
Northern Ireland, Judiciary 14
Rape, Privacy 16
Recorders, Manpower 319w
Trials, Mass media 15-6

Taylor, Mr Matthew
Debates etc.
Contracts for services (04:11:93) 532
Questions
Disablement schemes 70-2w
Inland Revenue, Civil service manpower 258w
PAYE, Debts written off 260w
Tax collection, Civil proceedings 257w
Treasury, Civil servants' business appointments 559w

Taylor, Sir Teddy
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 29
Football Spectators & Sports Grounds Orders 1993 (04:11:93) 570-3
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 84-7, 92, 94, 100
Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993 (03:11:93) 452
Questions
UK contributions to EC budget 119-20w, 259w

Tayside Health Board
529w

Teacher training
Wales 336w

Teachers
Child safety 409w
Vacancies 494-5w

Teaching hospitals
Family doctors 539w
Greater London 539w

Technical assistance
Paraguay 136w

"Technology Colleges"
396-7w
Departmental publications 396-7w

Technology schools initiative
Wales 333w

Telecommunications technology
Germany 234w
Planning permission 488-9w

Telephone services
Government departments 481w, 560w
Pornography 481w

Television
310w

Television licences
Fees & charges 309-10w

Television programmes
Quarry House 186w

Temple-Morris, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 25

10 Downing Street
92w
Repairs & maintenance 91-2w

Tenants' choice
3-4w, 485-6w

Tenants' rights
Council housing management 484-5w

Terrorism
Broadcasting controls 147, 576w
Church property 45w
Northern Ireland 357-60w

Tesco
(02:11:93) 317-24

Textile industry
EC grants & loans 513w

Thailand
Prostitution 28w

Thameslink
522w

Theft
Archaeological sites 8w

Thomason, Mr Roy
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 524
Questions
Japan, Foreign policy 340-1

Thompson, Sir Donald
Questions
Dept of National Heritage, Cash limits 99w

Thompson, Mr Patrick
Questions
Foyer hostel scheme 139

THORP
205w, 492w, 499-500w
Employment opportunities 266w
Industrial health & safety 433-4w
Licensing 433-4w
Public inquiries 491w
Radioactive waste disposal 345-6w

Thurnham, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 347-8
Questions
Clergy, Pensions 45w
Commission for Local Administration in Wales 10
Departmental correspondence, Bolton 482w
Public expenditure 463w
Schools, Capital investment 135
Sex education 495w
Sex education, Parents rights 391-2w
Tenants' choice 3-4w

Thurrock
Methane 6w
Motorway service areas 11-2w

Timber frame housing
Fire regulations 530w
Scotland 530w

Times
Unfair trading practices 512w

Tipping, Mr Paddy
Questions
Armenia, Sanctions 303-4w
Fire services, Finance 376-7w
Grant maintained schools, Nottinghamshire 409w
Monopolies & Mergers Commission, Gas supply industry 346w

Tipping of waste
EC action 5-6w
Methane 6w, 11-2w

Tobacco
VAT 256-7w

Tobacco advertising
454w

Tobacco duties
21w
Tax yields 256-7w

Top Salaries Review Body
(04:11:93) 542-53

Tornado aircraft
67w, 285-6w
Air accidents 131w, 287w
Low flying 287w

Tourist information
Egypt 27-8w

Tower Hamlets
Elderly 532w
Ethnic minorities 532w

Townend, Mr John
Questions
Ministry of Defence, Civil servants 133w

Townsend, Mr Cyril D
Questions
Palestinians, Refugees 330

Tracey, Mr Richard
Debates etc.
Regional planning & development (04:11:93) 523

Trade barriers
Japan 342

Trade competitiveness
464w
Literacy 94w

Trading standards departments
234w

Traffic lights
Cameras 523w

Training
Members 199-200w

Training allowances
Training & enterprise councils 578w

Training & enterprise councils
434w, (04:11:93) 517-27, 579w
Accounting 581w
Expenditure 164-5w
Finance 579-80w
Investors in people 157-8w
Performance standards 578w
Public meetings 165w
Training allowances 578w
Wales 511w

Training for work
581w
Expenditure 438-9w

Transcaucasus
Peace negotiations 595w

Trans-European Networks
Fishguard 10w
Harwich 10w

Transitional arrangements
Community care 166w, 168w

Transport of animals
Animal welfare 508w
Cattle 508w

Transport of radioactive materials
8w, 342w

Transport supplementary grants
226-31w

Travelling expenses
Disabled workers 576w

Travelling people
Avon 486w
Caravan sites 486w

Travelling people—continued
Scotland 450w

Travel-to-work areas
Haddington 242-3w

Treasury
Cash limits 21-2w
Civil servants' business appointments 559w
Civil service manpower 22w
Joint public-private sector ventures 118w

Treasury Supplement
269w

Treaty on European Union
336-7, 420w

Trials
Mass media 15-6

Trimble, Mr David
Questions
Northern Ireland, Judiciary 14

Trotter, Mr Neville
Questions
Low flying 472w

Tuberculosis
Vaccination 538w

Tunnels
Estuaries 340-1w

Turkey
Human rights 275w
Kurds 598-9w
Low flying 131w

Twinn, Dr Ian
Questions
Homelessness, Local government functions 2w

Tyler, Mr Paul
Debates etc.
Parliamentary questions (04:11:93) 584-6
Questions
Agricultural subsidies, Expenditure 507w
EC Cohesion Fund 515w
Environmentally sensitive areas 36w
Fish conservation, EC action 40w
Hill livestock allowances 106w
Irish Sea, Fish conservation 106w
Organic farming, Agricultural subsidies 507-8w
Water charges 515

Tyne & Wear
Housing construction 206w

Uganda
Elections 600-1w
General elections 601w, 603w
Overseas aid 600w

UK companies abroad
Lebanon 520w
South Africa 97w

UK contributions
International Planned Parenthood Federation 602w
UN Population Fund 602w
United Nations 602-3w

UK contributions to EC budget
119-20w, 259w

UN Convention on Biological Diversity
202w

UN High Commissioner for Refugees
595w, 602-3w
Codes of practice 303w

UN Population Fund
601w
UK contributions 602w

UN Protection Force
277w, 301-2w

UN resolutions
Cyprus 279w
Kashmir 599-600w

Unemployment
434w, 503
Building industry 503-4, 578w
Building workers 581w
Crime 16w
Educational qualifications 156w
Graduates 70w
Literacy 156w
Mental health 581w
Newport 47w
Northern Ireland 135w, 262-3w
Wales 9
Walsall 434w

Unemployment benefits
Social Security benefits rules 265-6w

UNESCO
28w, 479w, 595w

Unfair trading practices
Newspaper press 512w
Times 512w

Unibank Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
3R* (01:11:93) 1
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

UNICEF
Child abuse 531w

Union Railways
89w, 232w

UNITA
603w
Sanctions 333-4

United Arab Emirates
Foreign policy 279-80w

United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority
68-70w, 529w
Police 235w

United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary
235w

United Kingdom NIREX
Departmental correspondence 208w

United Nations
302-3w, 599w
Finance 602w
UK contributions 602-3w

University of Wales
336w

Uranium
Ammunition 476w

Urban development corporations
Expenditure 208w

Urban programme
Greater London 487-8w

Urban Regeneration Agency
328w, 485w
Expenditure 209w

Urology
Ayrshire & Arran Health Board 528w

Uruguay round
596w

US bases
292-3w

USA
Air routes 521w
Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty 418w
Nuclear weapons tests 597w

Vacancies
Lewisham 434-6w
Teachers 494-5w

Vaccination
Armed forces 475w
Chemical weapons 475-6w
Influenza 459w, 543-4w
Iraq-Kuwait conflict 475-6w

Vaccination—continued
Tuberculosis 538w

Valleys initiative
46w

Valuation Office
323w

Valuation tribunals
Council tax 323w

Value Added Tax (Beverages) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(03:11:93) 452-6
Questions
258-9w

Value Added Tax (Democratic Control) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
1R (03:11:93) 370

Values into Action
63w

Vandalism
Greater London 237-8w

VAT
255-6w, 461-2w, 501-2, 505-6
Accounting 462-3w
Air fares 560w
Building industry 510-1
Energy prices 150-2, 168w, 213w, 452w, 461w, 465w, 499-501, 506-7, 514, 540w, 546-7w, 549-50w, 560w
Fruit juices 22w, 258-9w, (03:11:93) 452-6, 509-10
Health hazards 213w
Newspaper press 505
Parliamentary sovereignty & European Community (03:11:93) 370
Personal income 510
Press advertising 558w
Publications 266w, 461-2w, 504-5, 513w, 551-2w, 557-8w
Schools 136w
Serials 556-7w
Tax allowances 256w
Tax yields 256w, 510
Tobacco 256-7w

VAT registration
Lewisham 465-6w

VAt zero rating
462w
Consumer expenditure 551w

Vaz, Mr Keith
Questions
Banks 19-20w
Mount Banking Corporation, Company liquidations 20w
United Arab Emirates, Foreign policy 279-80w

Vehicle Inspectorate
337w
Privatisation 521w
Sick leave 337-8w

Veterinary Medicines Directorate
33w

Vetting
Criminal records 574w
Fees & charges 574w

Victim support schemes
Government grants 451w
Scotland 243-4w, 451w

Victor aircraft
Arms trade 67w

Vietnam
Human rights 56w

Viggers, Mr Peter
Questions
Armed forces dependants, Maintenance 132w
Japan, Trade barriers 342
Millenium Fund 24w

Viral haemorrhagic disease
Notifiable diseases 219w

Visas
Philippines 87w

Vocational education
Schools 140

Voluntary organisations
Government grants 46w
Wales 46w

Vote bundle
198w
Costs 85w
Written questions 198-9w

Voting methods
EC external relations 338

***Waldegrave, Rt Hon William**, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster*
Debates etc.
Contracts for services, Ministerial statements (04:11:93) 528-38
Inland Revenue, Points of order (04:11:93) 539
Questions
Chartermark scheme 501-2w
Civil service agencies, Manpower 502w
Office of Public Service & Science, Joint public-private sector ventures 90w
Office of Public Service & Science, Cash limits 25-6w, 90w
Prime Minister, Official hospitality 25w
Science & technology, EC action 502w

Wales
Aizheimer's disease 50w
Beef premiums 336w
Bridges 334w
Building industry 8
Cattle 510w
Cereals 9-10
Children in care 47-8w
Civil service agencies 7-8
Coal mining 46w
Community action 436
Complaints against local government 10
Council housing 10-1
Cultural relations 593w
Domestic energy conservation 6-7
EC grants & loans 11
Economic policy 48-9w
Employment opportunities 7-9, 46w
European Parliament constituencies 569w
European Regional Development Fund 11
Exhaust emission controls 11w
Fishing vessels 310-1w
Flags 51w
Foreign investment in UK 8, 51w
Grant maintained schools 48w
Home helps 332w
Homelessness 3-4
Hospital consultants 511w
Hospital waiting lists 511w
House renovation grants 248w
Housing insulation 7
Industrial investment 47w
Labour Party 3
Local government finance 48w, 335w
Local government reform 48w
Manufacturing industries 47w
National parks 47w
NHS trusts 51w, 332w
Political offences 380w
Poverty 511w
Public appointments 47w
Public libraries 333w
Road accidents 50w
Road safety 50-1w
Roads 11
School meals 49w
Secure accommodation 51-2w
Secure training centres 18-9w
Sheep premiums 331w
Special education 110-2w, 336w
Suicide 334w
Teacher training 336w
Technology schools initiative 333w
Training & enterprise councils 511w

Wales—continued
Unemployment 9
Voluntary organisations 46w

Walker, Mr Bill
Questions
VAT 505-6

Wallace, Mr James
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 472-3
Questions
Devolution, Scotland 73-4w
Drift nets 313w

Waller, Mr Gary
Debates etc.
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 58-9
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 238-9
Questions
House of Commons annunciator system 197w
Members, Word processors 198w
Parliamentary data & video network 197-8w
POLIS, House of Commons questions 198w

Walley, Ms Joan
Questions
Companies, Debts 515w
Energy conservation, Finance 490-1w
Highways Agency 524w
Highways Agency, Managers 232w
Motor vehicle testing, Inspections 337w
Public service vehicles, Criminal records 521w
Public service vehicles, Finance 521-2w
Road haulage licences, Criminal records 337w
Vehicle Inspectorate, Privatisation 521w
Vehicle Inspectorate, Sick leave 337-8w

Walsall
Unemployment 434w

Wandsworth
Council tax 204w

War casualties
Bosnia-Herzegovina 302w

War crimes
Falkland Islands 365w, 525w

War crimes Act 1991
Questions
315-6w

Warble fly
311w, 505w

Ward, Mr John
Questions
Council of Europe, Human rights 328

Wardell, Mr Gareth
Questions
Amoxycillin, Prescriptions 59w
Community action, Wales 436
Fishing vessels, Licensing 311w, 506w
Fishing vessels, Shipping registration 310w
Home helps, Wales 332w
Morriston Hospital 332w
NHS trusts, Wales 332w
Non-departmental public bodies, Scotland 447w
Sexual offences, Children 563-8w
Technology schools initiative, Wales 333w
Tobacco advertising 454w
Welsh Office, Public appointments 331-2w

***Wardle, Mr Charles**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office*
Questions
Birmingham six 366w
Crime, Unemployment 16w
Criminal Justice Act 1993 575-6w
Criminal records, Vetting 574w
Dogs, Liability for animals 574w
Driving offences, Recreation spaces 17w
Entry clearances, Overseas workers 235-6w
Football, Netherlands 177-8w
Gardner, Joy 366w

Wardle, Mr Charles—continued
Immigration applications, Medical treatments 572-3w
Immigration applications, Somalia 571-2w
Immigration applications, Yugoslavia 573w
Khan, Amanullah 572w
Leicestershire Constabulary, Finance 182w
Metropolitan Police, Manpower 184-5w
Motor vehicle theft, Crime prevention 365w
Nuclear non proliferation, EC countries 569w
Overseas workers 173-4w
Overseas workers, Domestic service 363w, 562-3w
Police, Bexley 179w
Police, Disclosure of information 375w
Police, Finance 377w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 369-72w
Political refugees 568-9w
Refugees, Romania 185w
Schengen Agreement 182w
Security guards, Housing estates 183w
Security industry, Licensing 183-4w
Suicide 182-3w
War crimes, Falkland Islands 365w

Wareing, Mr Robert N
Questions
Belize, Armed forces deployment 336

Waste disposal
Letchworth (04:11:93) 618-24
Sea pollution 41-2w, 313w
Sewage 73w

Water charges
515

Water pollution
Beaches 327w
EC Cohesion Fund 327w

Watson, Mr Mike
Questions
Western Sahara, Peace negotiations 280w

Waveney
513-4w

WE 177 nuclear bomb
299-300w

Weed control
Ragwort 343w

Welfare milk
215w

Welsh, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Railways Bill 1992/93, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 103
Questions
Agriculture, Census 449w
Arable area payments scheme 509w
Arable area payments scheme, EC countries 448-9w
Arable area payments scheme, Scotland 528-9w
Salmonella, Eggs 457-8w, 545w
Salmonella, Research 457w

Welsh Development Agency
11-2

Welsh Office
Cash limits 52-3w
Civil service manpower 51w
Expenditure 47w
Joint public-private sector ventures 111w
Ministerial policy advisors 334w
Public appointments 47w, 331-2w

Welsh Water
49w

West Cumbria
68-70w

West Sussex County Council
523-4w

Western Isles Health Board
529w

Western Sahara
Peace negotiations 280w

Wheat
Agricultural production 314-6

***Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John**, Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office*
Questions
Custodial treatment, Northern Ireland 42w
Northern Ireland Office, Civil servants' background 262w
Northern Ireland Office, Non-departmental public bodies 264-5w
Northern Ireland Office, Official hospitality 356w
Road accidents, Taking & driving away 135w
Security, Northern Ireland 357-60w

Whittingdale, Mr John
Debates etc.
"Adoption White Paper" (03:11:93) 350
Questions
Alcoholic drinks duties, Tax evasion 554w
Alcoholic drinks duties, Tax yields 551-2w
Customs & Excise, EC internal trade 553w
EC internal trade, Off-licences 553w
Pigs, Agricultural subsidies 508w

Wicks, Mr Malcolm
Questions
Children, Maintenance 588w

***Widdecombe, Miss Ann**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Employment*
Questions
Age discrimination 435w
Building industry, Unemployment 578w
Community action 581w
Dept of Employment, Early retirement 156-7w
Dept of Employment, Non-departmental public bodies 165w
Employment opportunities, Lewisham 434w
Fares to work scheme 576w
Investors in people, Training & enterprise councils 157-8w
Labour market 581w
Literacy 155-6w
Low pay 158-64w
Low pay, Part-time employment 162w
Sex discrimination, Compensation 69-70w
Shipbuilding, Manpower 435w
Training & enterprise councils 579w
Training & enterprise councils, Accounting 581w
Training & enterprise councils, Expenditure 164-5w
Training & enterprise councils, Finance 579-80w
Training & enterprise councils, Performance standards 578w
Training & enterprise councils, Training allowances 578w
Training for Work 581w
Unemployment 434w
Unemployment, Educational qualifications 156w
Unemployment, Graduates 70w
Unemployment, Literacy 156w
Unemployment, Walsall 434w
Vacancies, Lewisham 434-6w
Youth training, National vocational qualifications 155w
Youth unemployment 155w

Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Debates etc.
Access to Parliament, Points of order (02:11:93) 210

Wigley, Mr Dafydd
Questions
Homelessness, Wales 4
Industrial injuries scheme, Coal mining 591-2w
Local government finance, Wales 48w
Political offences, Wales 380w

Willetts, Mr David
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 363

Williams, Rt Hon Alan
Debates etc.
Railways Bill 1992/93, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 275-6
Questions
Chequers, Security 92w
Ministers, Legal costs 282w
Pindar project, Construction costs 525w
Prime Minister, Manpower 481w
Prime Minister, Official cars 481-2w
Prime Minister's Policy Unit, Manpower 420w
10 Downing Street 92w
10 Downing Street, Repairs & maintenance 91-2w

Williams, Mr Alan W
Questions
Carbon dioxide, Energy conservation 3w
Housing insulation, Wales 7
Special education, Wales 336w
VAT, Tax yields 510
Welsh Office, Expenditure 47w

Williams, Hywel
334w

Wilshire, Mr David
Questions
Angola, Armed conflict 334-5

Wilson, Mr Brian
Debates etc.
British Rail, Points of order (03:11:93) 368
Business questions (01:11:93) 125
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (01:11:93) 43-50, 72-4, 80, 83-5, 95, 100
Railways Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (02:11:93) 161, 180, 199-202, 216-24, 240-1, 261-2, 285-6
Railways Bill, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 429-31

Wing bypass
Planning compensation 229w

Winnick, Mr David
Debates etc.
European Council (01:11:93) 29
Hare Coursing (No 2) Bill, 1R (02:11:93) 155
Opposition parties (04:11:93) 599, 610
Parliamentary questions (04:11:93) 579, 581-2, 586-7
Railways Bill 1992/93, Lords amendts (03:11:93) 421-2
Questions
Northern Ireland government, Referenda 419w

Winterton, Mr Nicholas
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 473
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 362-3
Questions
Eastern Europe, Manufacturing industries 340

Wise, Mrs Audrey
Questions
Smoking, Health education 210-1w

Women
Civil service manpower 577-8w
Hospital consultants 59w
Severe disablement allowance 83-4w

Women clergy
12-3

Women's prisons
Childbirth 14-5w
Pregnant women 14w

Woodgrange Park Cemetery Bill (HL) 1990/91
Debates etc.
3R* (02:11:93) 133, 134
Royal Assent (05:11:93) 625

Woodland grant scheme
152w

Word processors
Members 198w

Work permits
St Helena 599w

Working hours
Junior hospital doctors 60w

Workstart
437w

World War I
Armed forces punishment 472w

Worthing Borough Council
Road construction 342w

Worthington, Mr Tony
Questions
Angola, Armed conflict 334

Wray, Mr Jimmy
Debates etc.
Pension Law Review Committee (03:11:93) 365-6
Questions
Nursery schools, Pupil-teacher ratios 143

Wright, Dr Tony
Debates etc.
Ministerial & Other Salaries Order 1993 (03:11:93) 478-9
Questions
Council housing, Capital investment 320-2w
Further Education Funding Council for England, Expenditure 150w
Further Education Funding Council for Wales, Expenditure 112-3w
Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Expenditure 245w
Housing, Public investment 246-7w
Housing action trusts, Expenditure 103w
Housing Corporation, Government grants 321-2w
Local enterprise companies 530w
New towns development corporations, Scotland 151w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept for Education 494w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept of Employment 165-6w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept of Health 538-9w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept of National Heritage 97w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept of the Environment 104w, 489-90w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept of Trade & Industry 351-2w
Non-departmental public bodies, Home Office 185w
Non-departmental public bodies, Northern Ireland Office 264-5w
Non-departmental public bodies, Scottish Office 151w, 246w, 450w
Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, Expenditure 247w
Scottish Homes, Expenditure 247w
Training & enterprise councils, Expenditure 164-5w
Urban development corporations, Expenditure 208w
Urban Regeneration Agency, Expenditure 209w

Written questions
Vote bundle 198-9w

Wymott Prison
Prison accommodation 368-9w
Prison population 369w
Prison riots 367w
Sexual offences 367-8w

Yeo, Mr Tim, Minister of State, Dept of the Environment
Questions
Aerosols, Air pollution control 204w
Air pollution control, Local government functions 207w
Beaches, Water pollution 327w
Cancer, International conferences 322w
Carbon dioxide, Energy conservation 3w
Countryside, Surveys 327w
Development Below the Low Water 491w
Energy conservation, Finance 490-1w
Health physics 205w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, Air pollution control 489w
Ince B power station, Air pollution control 2-3w
Land pollution, Pollution control 326-7w
Methane, Tipping of waste 6w
Mining, Environmental impact assessment 491w
National Rivers Authority, Laboratories 489w
Orimulsion, Air pollution control 3w
Packaging, EC action 1-2w
Pennine Way 101w
Radioactive waste disposal 6w, 324w
Radioactive waste disposal, International conferences 324w
River pollution, Coal mine closures 7w
Sellafield, Radiation hazards 492w, 548w
Sustainable development 492w
THORP, Public inquiries 491w
Tipping of waste, EC action 5-6w
UN Convention on Biological Diversity 202w
United Kingdom NIREX, Departmental correspondence 208w

Ynys Mon
Social Fund 271-4w

Yorkshire & Humberside
61w, 343w
Forests 251-2w

Young, Rt Hon Sir George, Minister for Housing and Planning
Questions
Council house sales 488w
Council house sales, Mortgages 101w
Council housing, Capital investment 320-2w
Council housing finance 329w
Council housing management, Contracts for services 482w
Dept of the Environment, Non-departmental public bodies 489-90w
Docklands light railway, Directors 490w
Estate Action 486w
Homelessness, Local government functions 2w
House renovation grants 207w
Housing, Capital investment 482-4w
Housing, Supplementary credit approvals 319-20w
Housing action trusts, Brent 207-8w
Housing action trusts, Expenditure 103w
Housing action trusts, Liverpool 100-1w, 202w
Housing Association Tenants' Ombudsman 327w
Housing associations, Housing construction 7w
Housing associations, Rents 483-4w
Housing Corporation, Government grants 321-2w
Housing finance 329-30w
Housing improvement, Lancashire 329w
Housing investment programmes 483w
Lone parents, Housing 487w
Private rented housing 103w
Sheltered housing 325w
Sleeping rough, Greater London 322-3w
Tenants' choice 3-4w, 485-6w
Tenants' rights, Council housing management 484-5w

Young offenders
Administration of justice 375-6w
Magistrates 14-5
Prison sentences 575w

Young people
Housing benefits 456w
Secure accommodation 168w

Youth courts
Administrative delays 372-4w

Youth custody
179w

Youth services
Government grants to voluntary organisations 379w

Youth training
Expenditure 438-9w
National vocational qualifications 155w

Youth unemployment
155w

Yugoslavia
88w, 303w, 592w, 602-3w
Armed conflict 302-3w
Democracy 88w
Diplomatic service 303w
Immigration applications 572-3w
International assistance 602w
Peace negotiations 302w